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HISTORY OF THE
PEOPLE OF ENGLAND

VOL. IV

A.D. 1834 TO 1910
THE VICTORIAN AGE

THE BEDE HISTORIES

EDITED BY H. L. POWELL

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QUEEN VICTORIA AT THE AGE OF 20.

Frontispiece.

HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND

BY

ALICE DRAYTON GREENWOOD, F.R.Hist.Soc.

AUTHOR OF "LIVES OF THE HANOVERIAN QUEENS OF ENGLAND,"
"VOYAGES AND DISCOVERIES" (FROM HAKLUYT), ETC.

VOL. IV

A.D. 1834 TO 1910

THE VICTORIAN AGE

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

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HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND

VOL IV. 1834-1910

I

INTRODUCTORY

(i) THE REFORMS OF THE 'THIRTIES

RARELY is it possible to reckon a precise date as the beginning of an era. Even if 1066 or 1815 may be so reckoned, 1837 must not. A marked historical transformation must be regarded rather in the aspect of a watershed than as the hands of a clock.

Such an historical watershed is found in the decade 1830-40, when several weighty events mark the changing habits and the alteration in currents of thought which imparted to the Victorian age the character of a prolonged intellectual and democratic movement, both socially and politically.

The strenuous and enthusiastic 'thirties had opened tragically enough with the labourers' hopeless social revolt in the southern counties, which was being punished with a harshness more in character with 1381 in the very year which saw the Reform of Parliament, 1832. This grand achievement entailed the subsequent popularising of government by the franchise Acts of 1867 and 1884. It was more immediately followed by the reform of the Poor Law—carried through in the year which saw the destruction of the material Houses of Parliament (1834), by the reform of Municipal Government (1835), by the extinction of slavery in all British dominions, and by the first acts in the direction of national education and control of factories on behalf of the workers in them. Great reforms also began to be worked out in the administration of the law.

A strong lever for parliamentary government was found in the use of *Royal Commissions* of inquiry to collect and sift evidence of facts, and this was applied to investigate the grounds of popular discontent over the Church systems in both England and Ireland.

The introduction of a general and cheap postage is another sign of the times, made possible by the new modes of transport on land and water provided by the steam-engine.

All these new steps in government were the direct consequences of the Parliamentary Reform Act of 1832, which, by putting the election of members of the House of Commons in the hands of the

middle classes, gave them the power to carry out in fact the ideas which for a generation they had been learning and discussing. There was more than one school and prophet from whom the electors and M.P.'s had learned new principles, amounting to a challenge of that economic materialism which had been the dominant note from 1800 to 1832.

Outside the great Evangelical movement in religion, the most eminent and most influential school was that of the *Utilitarians*, whose first great name was Bentham, the inspirer of the reform of English law, but better known popularly by his dictum that the proper aim of government and civilised mankind is "the greatest good of the greatest number." His most effective disciples were Brougham, the Radical Lord Chancellor and educational pioneer, and the Mills, father and son. James Mill was a typical Scotch philosopher, who familiarised intellectual London with the strict logic and stern disregard of the affections and emotions characteristic of that school. As the compiler of an almost classical history of India he acquired considerable influence on the Indian policy of ministers, abstract principle being in the 'twenties and 'thirties very highly valued. Mill was the master of Ricardo, and of his own famous son, John Stuart Mill, one of the few infant prodigies whose career has not discredited a tyrannical parent. The profundity of J. S. Mill was equalled by a clarity of style which made him a recognised authority in the sphere of political economy and philosophy.

He was the first to advocate the practice of a doctrine already preached by Godwin and Shelley, that Woman had equal rights with Man, socially or politically.

Bentham and the Mills laid the intellectual basis of Radicalism, the political school which was slowly forging ahead throughout the Victorian Parliaments.

A more emotional and oratorical Scotch philosopher, Thomas Carlyle, was at the same time captivating, not political, but social reformers. Carlyle was a friend of Mill and of Maurice, and his career, like theirs, demonstrates the fact that London, not the two universities, nor even Edinburgh, was now the centre of intellectual life in Great Britain.

The most pressing reform with which the reformed House of Commons had to grapple was the reconstruction of the POOR LAW, a task now long overdue and of herculean difficulty. It was the outcome of a careful inquiry into the effects of the old system made by a *Poor Law Commission* (Bishops of London and Chester, Edwin Chadwick and five other experienced members). After two years of investigation all over England they presented to Parliament a great Report, which was published (1834), and remains the record of the poverty and misery of both the workers and the workless and of the faulty modes of dealing with them.

The prime fault discovered was that the magistrates and their

subordinate officials often made such lavish doles, especially in the southern counties, as actually to encourage pauperism and drive down wages, and even to ruin the less wealthy of the class that paid the heavy rates. The poor found it better to be paupers and receive outdoor grants (of money, food, fuel, etc.) than to strive for independence, and it paid the farmers better to employ paupers at a very low wage than independent men at higher wages, because they had in any case to pay the high rates for supporting the pauper families. In some places the rate was more than 20s. in the £ (of the farmer's rent), and as rents were high, so were rates. "There was no competition between the working people; old and young, skilled and unskilled, the industrious and the idle were held worthy of equal reward . . . while the parochial authorities exercised a benevolent superintendence over the welfare and liberty of every day-labourer." The result, said the Commissioners, was "the decline of a race of free men into a race of slaves unconscious of their slavery, and the gradual ruin of the landlords and farmers upon whom the maintenance of these slaves depended." They observed, however, that there were many country districts where neither factory hands nor peasantry had fallen into such dire distress, always where the small squires still were resident and dealt intelligently and kindly with their tenants.

The Commissioners recommended one general system, to be enforced over all the land: that outdoor relief at the discretion of the local overseers should cease; that *paupers* should be distinguished from *the poor*, and the former alone relieved from the rates; and that the *unions* of parishes made permissible by Gilbert's Workhouses Act (1782) should now become compulsory and a proper workhouse be provided for every union under rules which should be similar in every county. A small government committee should supervise the whole.

The dismal revelations of the Report horrified people, and a Bill was quickly brought in to give effect to the recommendations in spite of a loud outcry against the severity of the new treatment to the poor, who had become accustomed to the parish doles. *The Times* and Cobbett's *Register* (an odd pair) alike denounced the Bill, but owing to the agreement of Peel and Wellington with Brougham, it was quickly made law (1834). Far-sighted men began to hint that it would make necessary an alteration of the Corn Laws, because the workmen, deprived of the old doles, could not support their families if bread cost more than their wages, and nobody could imagine that higher wages would be paid.

The *Municipal Reform Act* (1835) was a necessary complement of the parliamentary Reform Act. It broadened the basis of local government in towns by providing for popular election, and empowered the Government to bestow a charter of incorporation upon any towns which petitioned for one.

The system was to be the same in all towns except London, which

had a special Act to itself, later. The householders (if they paid £10 rent or over) were to elect a number of Councillors, and the Councillors to elect Aldermen from among themselves; Councillors and Aldermen formed the Town Council and elected their Mayor.

The Town Councils were given authority to undertake all public works and duties, but unhappily they were not ordered to do so, and it was left to individual character to decide whether the leading citizens would burden themselves with arduous duties or not, and impose rates upon themselves and their neighbours or not.

The Act was drawn up with a strict attention to population, on which ground a number of small and ancient boroughs which had for centuries retained their antique councils and customs were now deprived of them and left under county authority (at that time still vague)—to their great regret and sometimes to the regret of succeeding generations.

A new assistance to government was at this time devised in the erection of *Commissions* of investigation. A *Commission*, Royal or Parliamentary, was composed of a few selected persons believed to possess real knowledge of the subject in question. They need not all be members of Parliament, but enough members were chosen to represent the different parties in the Houses. They were given precise instructions on the matter to be investigated, had power to take evidence on oath (*i.e.* as if they were a law court) and must travel to any place necessary. When they had collected the information they had to draw up a Report, which was printed and laid before the Houses and could usually be purchased by the public through booksellers. In this way members of Parliament and the general public were educated on many subjects, while the expert Commissioners could recommend practical steps unbiased by political or private interests.

(ii) FACTORY ACTS

Neither political party considered it necessary to plan domestic reform beyond the New Poor Law, and therefore the redress of the most crying social abuses, as the industrial enslavement of children, and the neglect of national health and education, took a very long time, being undertaken by private members without the backing of a party or the Government.

There was more than one reason for this apathy of Parliament. Affairs more purely political were pressing and interested everyone; much time and anxiety had to be devoted to Ireland, while many statesmen who had grown up in the atmosphere of the past century supposed their main duty to lie in securing 'order' at home and peace in Europe. They all now believed interference with industry to be pernicious, though they preserved their faith in the power of a parliamentary Act to alter facts. The Union of Great Britain

and Ireland, the Roman Catholic Relief Act, the Reform Act, the Municipal Reform Act, the New Poor Law, and, rather later, the Repeal of the Corn Laws, were, each in turn, regarded as panaceas which would produce results so satisfactory that nothing further need be done. Men shut their eyes to unpleasant evidence or quoted abstract rules to shelve it.

Melbourne, Home Secretary before he became Prime Minister, could calmly write that he was "afraid that Malthus was right" and that famine and disease were the only cure for over-population, which was not exactly what Malthus said, but turned his statement of a sequence of facts into a 'natural law' for the better suppression of troublesome reformers.

The reformers had in any case a long leeway to make up and had first to create a conscience among the reading and thinking public, and next to bring pressure by the public to bear on a Parliament which would not otherwise believe that anything need or could be done.

The most crying evils seemed to be those connected with child labour in factories and mines. The help of children at home in spinning and like tasks was, of course, of immemorial custom,¹ but the machines for worsted spinning were not at all suitable for child workers. The increasing poverty of working men and the increasing avarice of their masters had produced ever longer hours in factories. Little children were made to work in mines because it was easier and cheaper to cut the galleries small, and in sweeping chimneys because it was fashionable to build these crooked. Most masters preferred children because they would be paid very little, while the parents' wages were so low that they counted on their children's wages.

A beginning had been made in 1802 to protect the most ill-used children from the grosser cruelties to which they were exposed, by the first Sir Robert Peel, a great manufacturer and father of the future minister. He was an influential supporter of Pitt, and no hindrance was offered to his measure, which forbade child apprentices to be worked for longer than twelve hours a day. A distinction was at that time drawn between *apprentices*, legally consigned to employers by parish vestries on the Tudor system, and 'free' child labourers who were hired with their parents' consent. Everybody assumed that there was a necessity for the labour of children in factories, because certain manipulations of the machines could be done best by small fingers, and the adult operatives could not be employed on their own tasks if that manipulation was lacking: therefore a reduction in children's hours implied a reduction in

¹ *E.g.* "The Free Maids who weave their thread with bones" (*Twelfth Night*, II. iv.) or the Bluecoat Maids at Christ's Hospital, who spun muslin thread. A Caroline reformer (Yarranton, *England's Improvement*, 1677) greatly wished that "these tender fingers" were always so employed instead of children wasting time learning to read.

men's and women's hours, not always welcome to the 'hands' and never to the employers.

It was apparently beyond imagination that machines might be so altered as not to require the touch of children, and equally impossible to imagine paying grown persons to do work which the children could do at a nominal wage. In any case Liverpool and Castlereagh had no desire to offend mill-owners or any other business men. In vain, then, did Henry Bennet, a pioneer in humane thought, call the attention of the House of Commons (1815-19) to the cruelties inflicted on little boys used as chimney-sweeps. Long before this the poet Blake had written his pathetic lines on these tortured little slaves, and the Quaker philanthropist Hanway—he who made popular the use of the umbrella—had exerted his influence in the same cause but equally in vain (from 1773). A cautious Act had indeed been passed in 1788, but without any penalties, so that it was a dead letter except as giving authority to any humane magistrates who here and there might choose to put it in operation.

Progress in the protection of the weak by the law began only when Lord Ashley, afterwards seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, began his lifelong crusade on behalf of the helpless. A profoundly religious man of the same evangelical school as Wilberforce, Ashley was convinced that it was his duty to obtain protection for lunatics, children and the poor workpeople of town or country. To this duty he sacrificed his political career, his means, comfort and peace of mind. He was not only a pioneer in reform of the law on lunacy and child labour, and in the creation of Ragged Schools, Boards of Health, and Foreign Missions, but he was the most persistent worker in these and similar fields of effort. He lived to see success, but the struggle filled his long life. His efforts to prevent little boys from being used as live chimney-cleaners began in 1834, but were not finally victorious till 1875, a full century after Hanway's appeal had first made public the cruelty of the system.

During this long period the treatment of children depended on the magistrates, who in the growing towns had still the same position and powers as in rural districts. The towns, therefore, differed in the treatment meted out to children, especially to chimney-sweeps. At Sheffield two magistrates long prevented the use of any climbing boys as chimney-sweeps; at Manchester a committee of factory-owners somewhat protected the factory children and discouraged boy sweeps, while, on the other hand, some of the West Riding clothing towns were full of deformed children, crippled by their work, and Liverpool and Nottingham were notorious for the number of infant sweeps: "a Nottingham boy is worth more to sell," a master explained. Bristol, too, was very bad in this respect, while Bath was unusually humane.

In 1818 Sir Robert Peel the elder induced Parliament to extend his Act by forbidding any children under nine to be employed in

cotton mills at all. But the provisions for carrying out the Act were feeble; it was a dead letter outside Manchester and, besides, applied only to cotton mills. But it provided a starting-point for an agitation to reduce the hours of child labour in textile factories in general. Two large employers, Fielden and Wood, found money and organised committees in their own towns, Manchester and Bradford respectively, to obtain a *Ten Hours Bill*.

Oastler, a land agent in the West Riding, and Michael Sadler,¹ a man of business in Leeds, both Tories, were the first champions. Oastler published some startling letters on *Yorkshire Slavery*, while Sadler induced the Commons to appoint a select committee to hear evidence as to the employment of children in factories (1831-2). In the elections over the Reform Bill Sadler lost his seat, but he secured Ashley as the children's and workpeople's champion. Ashley persevered for fifteen years, conducting through Parliament five Bills, one after another, till in 1847 an effective Act was at last carried.

The Whig, Tory and Radical leaders alike (John Russell, Peel and Bright) agreed in opposing his Bill; when he got it passed in the Commons the Lords threw it out; when it was passed by the Lords the Commons threw it out. Neither Peel nor Russell would displease the industrial magnates, and Peel once made twelve or ten hours a government question, saying he should resign if Ashley carried ten. John Bright had the Quaker capitalists of the northern textile towns behind him, who did not scruple to circulate unjust personal charges against Ashley. In the Lords the Tory Londonderry and the Whig ex-premier Melbourne, respectively mineowners in Durham and Derbyshire, were equally obstinate.

The majority of the mill-owners declared that "the industry could not bear" the proposed restriction of hours. Russell was indignant at the attempt to hamper commerce by shackling the children's "freedom of contract" or interfering with those sacred ties which made parents the only fit judges of what was good for their children. In vain did Ashley appeal for aid to Wilberforce, the champion of the negro slaves, who, like Melbourne and many another fond parent, was merely offended by his indignant descriptions of English slavery. They called his Bills "insults to the most humane people in the world."

But in 1840 Ashley obtained a Commission to investigate mines, and once again a Commission compelled the nation to think and Parliament to act. The Report described such appalling conditions among the children and women employed in collieries, that the House of Commons and public opinion immediately endorsed a *Mines Act* which excluded children under ten and women from the coal pits (1842). Two-thirds of the colliery owners, Ashley learned, desired such a law, but no one of them dared act alone.

'Humanitarianism,' however popular its expression on plat-

¹ He was the son of a small Derbyshire squire, an M.P.

forms and in books, produced little result, till the conviction of duty which animated Ashley, Kingsley, Sadler, Oastler, and such devoted medical men as Southwood Smith, inspired prolonged efforts which in time drove an unwilling Parliament and an inert public to action.

Dickens was the most scathing satirist both of the cruel and of the mere sentimentalists. Virtually he created a public opinion.

In the political sphere, after the accomplishment of the sweeping reforms of 1832-6, a hankering for the reposeful shades of Opposition seemed to beset both Whigs and Tories. There was a general feeling that at least two fresh political storms were on the verge of explosion, and the leaders of neither party were very anxious to have to ride the tempest.

There was (1) the problem of the supply of bread for the British Isles, called the *Corn Laws question*, and (2) there was the eternal *Irish question*—how to deal with the ever-increasing misery and violence of that island and with the political manœuvres conducted in connection with it by O'Connell in the House of Commons.

The 'Irish question' had since the Union been an ever-present English question, because a large number of the members from Ireland refused to join either Whigs or Tories but voted according to the directions of their leader, O'Connell, so that the 'Irish party' formed a Third Section in the House of Commons, its votes frequently enabling the Opposition to defeat the Government. O'Connell's plan was to thwart every Ministry so as to extort his own terms as the price of his permission to carry on English and Scottish business. The Irish question, therefore, could not be considered apart from British politics, and it frequently proved the solvent of Ministries and parties. Grey's first attempt to deal with the Irish grievance of tithes disintegrated his Cabinet, and after receiving five resignations he himself retired.

Melbourne succeeded to the unenviable task of patching up a discouraged Ministry under the clouds of public unpopularity and the cordial dislike of William IV.

Worried by the popular agitation against the Corn Laws, and the agitation in the House for domestic reforms, bullied by O'Connell and betrayed by Brougham, who sold the Prime Minister's political secrets to *The Times* and publicly derided the King, Melbourne allowed the King to perceive his dejection and to make up his mind for him. William assumed that he meant to resign, and Melbourne acquiesced and actually carried the royal summons to the Duke of Wellington before informing his indignant but helpless colleagues of what he had done.

Melbourne was a highly cultivated and courteous man, impartial on nearly every topic and hesitating over every decision. "Why can't you let it alone?" was his habitual reply to would-be reformers. "When in doubt what to do, do nothing," was the rule he enjoined on Government departments, a policy which was largely

responsible for the Bristol riots and for the civil troubles in Canada.

In trying to estimate the conditions of England during and after the long war, it is necessary to remember that the descriptions left to us by contemporaries reflect the knowledge and temperament of the person writing. Some admire the sight of buildings and smoke as the proof of prosperous industry; others look for the picturesque with the eye of the artist—the artist in possession either of good means or of good patrons. Others simply mention the unpleasantness they experienced as we should mention the weather, an incident obviously without remedy. Cobbett, the agitator, who expressed his horror at the extraordinary growth of London (“it is a great wen”), declared the valley of Todmorden, covered with houses, to be a delightful prospect: “The most curious and romantic that was ever seen, and where the water and the coal seemed to be engaged in a struggle for getting foremost in point of utility to men.”

Byron, poet and wealthy nobleman, was about the same period castigating his fellow-landlords as the cause of popular misery:

“Alas the country! How shall tongue or pen
 Bewail her now, *uncountry* gentlemen!
 The last to bid the cry of warfare cease,
 The first to make a malady of peace!
 For what were all these country patriots born?
 To hunt, and vote, and raise the price of corn,
 But corn, like ev’ry mortal thing, must fall:
 Kings, conquerors, and *markets last of all.*”

What, it was asked, might replace the home industries which had supplemented wages?¹ At best, a portion of land which the labourer’s family could cultivate “during their spare hours,” after, that is, they all had been working for most of the day upon a farm, for wages. Such gardens were still usually to be seen in Dorset, Wilts, Somerset and Devon, as well as in parts of Wales and several other districts. But the *spare hours* of labouring folk had been a favourite food of the spare thoughts of economists since, at least, the Tudor times.

¹ *From the Poor Law Report, 1834* (p. 181) (by a witness on Wilts and Dorset):

“The day is not long past since in every industrious cottage family the wheel and the distaff, the shuttle and the knitting-needles, were in full activity. At present, to compete with machinery would be a useless waste of time, money and labour.”

II

VICTORIA (JUNE 1837—JANUARY 1901). POLITICAL OUTLINE

VICTORIA'S reign, covering the long period of sixty-three years, which witnessed a transformation in national habits and ideas amounting to a social and political revolution, witnessed also during the same time changes on the continents of Europe and North America which left Great Britain surrounded by a transformed world, continually changing, and ever more rapidly.

This long period seems to divide naturally into three portions : the first, the era of Peel and Palmerston, coming to a climax in the 'fifties with the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny. The 'sixties form a kind of intellectual watershed, and with the death of Palmerston, in 1865, the second era, that of Gladstone and Disraeli, is at its height, a peace period, the wars which mark this age being those of other nations. Thirdly, the Home Rule contests usher in the modern age, and the statesmanship of Salisbury and Chamberlain, when the British Empire may be said to have uttered a gruff revelation of itself in the South Africa War.

In 1837 the accession of Queen Victoria, a girl of seventeen, almost unknown in fashionable London and the political world, produced grave perturbation in that world. The crown had been worn only by elderly men since times already beyond memory or even anecdote. The imaginative searched the centuries for youthful or female sovereigns and discovered *favourites*—Sarah Marlborough, the Duke of Buckingham, or even Leicester. Only one man was able to imagine that the reign of a Queen might prove to be the golden age of the British Constitution, but that man possessed both the opportunity and the mind to make it so.

Lord Melbourne was Prime Minister and, constitutionally, had to be the young Queen's counsellor. She was peculiarly solitary ; her mother, half-sister and governess were all German, her elderly uncles neither could nor would afford her any guidance, and although the Duchess of Kent and Baroness Lehzen had with entire devotion educated her wholly in view of her arduous destiny, yet she was still of necessity ignorant of men and of politics.

Melbourne rose to this unusual emergency, like Grey to Reform, with prompt resolution. Discarding like a garment his customary cynicism and the lax habits of forty years, he revealed himself as the prudent statesman, the sympathetic, almost fatherly, guardian



John Bright. Lord J. Russell. Gladstone. Disraeli.

PUNCH ON REFORM OF PARLIAMENT.

Superintendent Bull: "Come, look alive! I must have the line cleared. There are no end of trains due."

Johnny Russell: "It's my job, sir, if you please!"

John Bright: "His job! Best leave it to me and my mates."

Ben Dizzy: "Our gang'll manage it, if you'll lend a hand, Bill Gladstone."

and chivalrous servant. From State interviews with ambassadors to the arrangement of family dinner-parties, the Queen took no step without his counsel.

Foreigners supposed he would be minister for life; even the Duke of Wellington gloomily declared that under a female sovereign the Tories could never be in office—because “I have no small talk and Peel has no manners.” But Napoleon had formerly blamed Wellington himself for not dethroning George III, and Melbourne was no less loyal to the British Constitution. The true place of the Crown in the national government and the spirit in which its undefined, but none the less real, prerogative should be exercised was of the essence of his tuition of his young sovereign. When, in two years’ time, his Ministry no longer commanded a majority in the House of Commons he duly presented his resignation and advised her Majesty to send for Sir Robert Peel, as leader of the Opposition, and it was only Peel’s obstinate stiffness which caused him to refuse the responsibility and obliged the Whigs to go on for a year longer. The responsibility of an outgoing Premier for the direction of the royal invitation to his successor has never since been questioned, nor that it is the duty of each retiring minister to hand over his office in proper order to his successor.

The outline of political events at home must first be considered, since they provide the framework of most of the important changes. The outstanding parliamentary figures conform to certain types, whether they ranked themselves in the Tory, Whig or Radical parties, for there were now three parties, not two.

The era is introduced by the Whig Melbourne and the Tory Wellington, both belonging to the old aristocratic school of statesmen, though chiefs of opposite parties. Of the same dignified and cultivated type were the Earl of Derby, the Tory (or Conservative) leader from 1846, and Lords Palmerston and Russell, the most famous Whig ministers till 1860.

But the leaders in the Commons were even then already assuming a more modern character. Palmerston himself belongs to the school of statesmen concerned mainly with the international position of Great Britain, a political heir of Canning and Chatham. John Russell, who for many years was the official chief of the more important Palmerston, was hardly more than a skilful party manager with a few stereotyped ideas and an imperturbable conviction of his own importance.

But Peel, and after him Gladstone, belong to the school of statesmen primarily concerned with the harmonious development of the nation within itself, political heirs of the younger Pitt. They were keenly alive to the importance of the electors, and Gladstone adopted a new method of political propaganda by addressing them directly, after the example which Canning had once or twice set, but which was not at that time generally approved.

Disraeli, on the other hand, stands in contrast to the usual types

of modern statesmen and was rather the architect of a new political edifice, the British 'imperial' or world state. He habitually confined his speeches to the House of Commons and appealed to the public only occasionally and in print.

In 1841 Melbourne was at last replaced as Prime Minister by Peel, whose repeal of the Corn Laws (1846) broke up his own Conservative party and enabled the Liberal party to come into power, under Russell and Palmerston. The Great Exhibition of 1851 and the death of Wellington in the following year were more interesting to the people than political mutations, while social reforms rather than party politics filled the minds of the most eminent intellectual leaders. A brief Conservative Ministry was formed by Lord Derby in 1852, Disraeli being leader in the Commons. Then, as neither party commanded a clear majority in the Houses, Lord Aberdeen formed a coalition ministry of Whigs, Liberals and Peelites which "drifted into" (as he himself said) the Crimean War of 1854-6, and was obliged to resign. Palmerston next became Prime Minister, and on his death and Russell's retirement Gladstone succeeded to the headship of the party now avowedly Liberal. Lord Derby formed a Conservative Ministry in 1866 which lasted only two years, but age forced him too to retire, when Disraeli became undisputed Conservative leader.

With Palmerston's death the first half of the Victorian age may be said to close. The new parties were by that time consolidated, and the almost epic rivalry of Disraeli and Gladstone gives a kind of consistency to the second political period which had not for a long while been seen. They held office in turn: 1868-74, Gladstone; 1874-80, Disraeli; 1880-85, Gladstone. His bill for Home Rule in Ireland, however, broke up his party and, Disraeli having died in 1881, Lord Salisbury succeeded as Conservative Prime Minister, and held office for the rest of Victoria's reign, save for the interlude of the three years' Ministry of Gladstone and Rosebery (1892-5), which carried an Irish Home Rule Bill through the Commons, but not the Lords.

In foreign countries, the striking events which affected Great Britain began in 1848, when Europe was convulsed by military and political revolution. In France, after the brief experiment of the Second Republic, an Empire was proclaimed by Napoleon III (1852), which lasted till 1870.

The rivalries or alliances of the three military autocrats in Russia, Austria and Prussia produced a war in the Balkan peninsula which entailed the Crimean War of 1854-6, and this had considerable influence in producing the Indian Mutiny (1857-8).

Next came the Franco-Italian war on Austria, which was the beginning of the 'Liberation of Italy' (1859-61), and greatly interested this country, though the civil war of 'North and South' in the United States (1861-5) affected us more profoundly.

During the same period Bismarck was constructing the military union of Germany under Prussia, which culminated in the defeat of Austria in 1866 and of France in 1871, and produced the German Empire of 1871-1918 and the Third Republic in France. The 'sixties, then, witnessed the alteration of the old political balance of Europe, Italy and Germany, respectively, becoming united realms, while Austria weakened, and the Ottoman Empire began to break up; Russia, during this series of alterations, appearing ever stronger and more ambitious.

A sensation of newness and of making a fresh start, politically or socially, was noticeable during the first ten years of the Queen's reign. The novelty of youth and womanhood on the throne was hardly less than the novelty of a court innocent of the vices and follies which had for several generations been at home there. The coarse traditions of nearly two centuries now vanished: not since the accession of Charles I, "The White King," had so wonderful a change been known. Not that Victoria became immediately popular: the kindly wished well to her, and might think well of her marriage with Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg, but the censorious were long on the watch for scandals or grievances, and since the Prince Consort was a foreigner it was widely felt to be natural, and even praiseworthy, to find fault with him when it was difficult to do so with the sovereign herself.

Time and experience, however, gradually permeated society with the peculiar influence of a pure court and a public-spirited royal family.

III

THE NEW COMMERCE

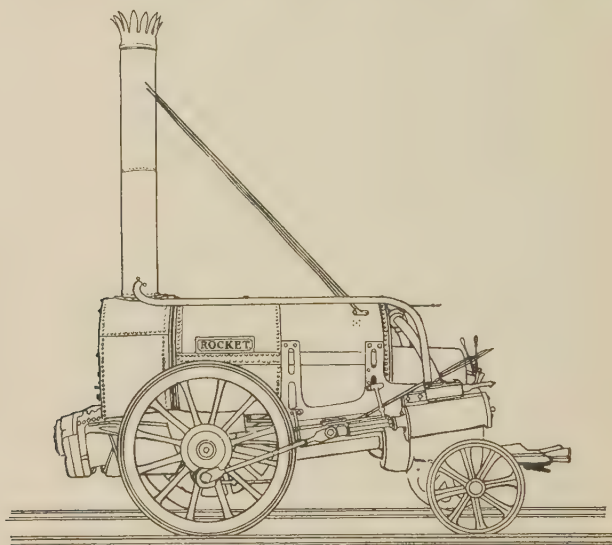
(i) REPEAL OF THE CORN LAWS

THE man who procured the reversal of the accepted principles of England's economic system was Richard Cobden.

The son of a Sussex yeoman farmer, he went, like Robert Owen, after receiving a London business training, to that factory-land of promise, Manchester. As soon as he found himself on the way to commercial success, his ambition, like Owen's, soared to a still wider career. After making some rapid tours in the United States and the Near East, he compiled a set of new theories, politico-commercial, which he circulated in pamphlets. He advocated, in brief, a simple-seeming policy of withdrawing from international relations ('foreign politics' they began to be termed) so as to economise in taxation. More capital would then flow into industries, while the abolition of duties on imported raw materials should also make those industries more profitable. Corn was to be included among the cheap raw materials in order to improve the condition of the workmen: by this plan commerce would become 'free.' Manchester and all South Lancashire embraced Cobden's ideas eagerly and formed an *Anti-Corn-Law League* to propagate them, directed by Cobden and John Bright (1838).

Bright was a Rochdale manufacturer and Nonconformist who had risen to notice in youth by conducting a campaign against paying Church rates. His eloquence and the natural popularity of his recommendation not to pay had given him a local fame which was greatly increased by his eloquent orations on behalf of 'Free Trade.' The phrase was not new, but it now acquired a new signification, for by *free trade* Pitt's generation had meant a reciprocal commerce between two countries, such as was obtained by Pitt's French treaty. But Cobden and Bright meant the removal at our own ports of duties on imports into this country, without regard to the action of other countries. Cobden regarded untaxed trade as a kind of moral ideal, and he was positive that all countries would follow the example if England would but begin it. As the flannel trade of Lancashire was then nearly ruined by a prohibitive tariff set up by the United States (1841), it would be of enormous advantage to Lancashire if a free import of American cotton and corn here should produce a free entry of Lancashire cloths there.

With regard to corn, ever since 1815 there had been continual argument over the import duties. The entire nation was divided into opposite camps by the subject. Most people wished to have cheaper bread, but the unsolved question was—how? By a larger importation, replied the townspeople, especially in the north, where the factory owners and the middle classes were all for a free import. But the agricultural interest—landlords, farmers and all who depended on them—insisted that foreign corn must be subjected to such duties as would protect home-grown wheat from falling to too low a price.¹ They pointed out that on the price fetched by his wheat depended the farmer's power of employing



THE ROCKET.

labour and of paying rent, rates and taxes, all of which were between 1838 and 1845 very heavy: they therefore exhorted the mill-owners to pay higher wages so as to enable their employees to buy bread at a just price.

The manufacturers' party, on the other hand, retorted that the price of corn was being artificially raised by high duties in order to keep up rents at the real expense of the town classes: let rents, they said, be lowered and farmers live more frugally, so that both home-grown and foreign wheat might be sold cheaply.

Most of the country population was well aware that low corn prices, coming on the heels of the new machinery, meant destitution for the peasantry; but in many counties the poor were already so

¹ For a graphic illustration see Mary Webb: *Precious Bane*.



COACHING IN A FLOOD.

facing p. 16.

miserable that they were inclined to pray for cheap bread whatever the indirect effects might be. A labourer who attended a Free Trade meeting is said to have made the pithy speech: "I be protected, and I be starving." Similarly, even in the towns which most loudly clamoured for free trade in corn, there was a section among the workmen who believed 'cheap bread' to be but the masters' latest device for keeping wages low.

The agricultural interest further added that it was not solely a question of cheap bread, but of maintaining a country population in existence; for without that full employment which arable farming alone could provide, numbers must starve or emigrate.

The manufacturing interest replied that this plea was obsolete, that the nation's weal must be treated as a whole, the simplest and best course being to leave agriculture as a business to "other countries less advanced" in mechanics, which would "naturally" grow corn to sell to us, while Britain would with free imports become "the workshop of the world," and by exporting her manufactured commodities purchase in exchange the world's corn.

It was the old argument of Cecil and Raleigh,¹ two and a half centuries earlier, but it was now to be settled on the side of Raleigh and of Cobden.

The typical corn law was that of 1822: viz. that only when the home price of corn reached 70s. the quarter should foreign corn be admitted, and then only on paying a duty of 12s. But if the price rose to 80s. the duty should fall to 5s., and if the price rose to 85s. (famine mark) the duty should fall to the nominal one of a shilling. Peel and Wellington had already lowered these import duties in 1828 by a 'sliding scale,' the duty going up or down as the home price fell or rose; but it had not been successful in tempting foreign corn into the English market when wanted, for foreign merchants waited till famine prices were reached so as to import free and sell dear. Nor was it possible suddenly to obtain an extra stock of wheat unless it had been sown months beforehand. These considerations moved many men of business to advocate a low fixed duty, so that foreign merchants might know their prospects and be encouraged to get the corn grown.

This, indeed, had been the policy adopted by the Whigs, the usually placid Melbourne having declared, "To leave the whole agricultural interest without protection I think, before God, the wildest and maddest scheme that has ever entered into the imagination of man to conceive."

But the Whigs were unable to carry their measure, and asked the Queen to dissolve Parliament. The election gave a large majority to the Conservative party, which had, in opposing the Whigs, pledged itself to resist any sacrifice of national agriculture (1841).

Members were startled, therefore, to hear Peel (now again Prime Minister) announce that his aim was "to revive commerce and

¹ Vol. II. of this *History*, ch. xx (p. 183).

effect such an improvement in the manufacturing interests as would react on every other interest in the country " (1842). To do this, he lowered the old *sliding scale* of the corn duty and also removed a number of small import duties, but, to recoup the revenue, he imposed an *Income Tax* of 7*d.* in the £, which, like the taxation of the eighteenth century, fell more heavily on landowners and farmers than on townspeople, because their profits (or income) were ordered to be reckoned as equal to one-half of their rents.

Anxiety now agitated Peel's supporters: an influential peer resigned and the ablest of the younger Conservatives, Disraeli, began to attack the Prime Minister for sacrificing agriculture to factories. Peel was in all manner of other difficulties. He could not pass his Bill for education owing to the opposition of the Dissenters. There was trouble in India, Afghanistan and China, and in South Africa, and, above all, in Ireland, where Peel's grants of money to rival education bodies stirred up much more animosity than they allayed. Finally, the very wet season in 1845 ruined the harvest in both England and Ireland, and was followed by the potato famine of 1846 in Ireland and parts of Scotland.

Peel seized this moment to propose to his colleagues in the Cabinet a total abolition of the corn duties, and as none of them would support him, he resigned. The Queen sent for John Russell, but he was not at all desirous of taking office at that dangerous moment, and told her Majesty that he was unable to form a Cabinet. Sir Robert Peel, therefore, resumed office, all the stronger as being proved indispensable.

Peel now announced that he had been converted by the arguments of Cobden, and introduced his Bill for the abolition of the Corn Laws, by a process to be spread out over three years. But he could not convert the whole Conservative party, many of whom followed Disraeli and Lord Stanley into the Opposition lobby. As, however, most of the Whigs and Irish members voted with him, Peel was able to carry Free Trade in Corn by their votes, against the majority of his own party (1846). The Bill was carried in the Lords by Wellington's influence, the Duke having made a kind of alliance with Peel, and treating him much as in the field he had treated Blücher.

In the meantime Peel had brought in another Bill, commonly called his *Coercion Bill*, to obtain special powers for putting down violence in Ireland, that unhappy country being in the horrors of starvation and of violence. This gave an opportunity to the Whigs and Irish, who, as soon as the Corn Bill was safely through the House of Lords, combined with Disraeli's angry Conservative section to defeat the Coercion Bill in the Commons, whereupon Peel had to resign in reality (1846).

The effects of Peel's remarkable conversion to Free Trade were far-reaching. In the first place, the spectacle of a Prime Minister standing up in the House to announce that he had suddenly reversed

the principles of his Government, and appealing to his party to ignore the pledges which, as a party and individually, they had made to the electors, gave a moral shock to the nation : there had been nothing like it since Fox and North. Could any statesman's word be believed? Could any party stick to a policy? Peel adduced no fresh arguments in addition to those long ago published by Cobden, except the famine in Ireland, and this last was hardly to be remedied by abolishing the corn duties, which was to take three years.

Secondly, the destruction of the entire tariff for corn incidentally swept away a cardinal feature of the recognised colonial system. So long as duties were levied on raw materials, the wheat of Canada and the sugar of the British West India Islands were taxed more lightly than the products of French or other alien territories (known as *preferential treatment*). The disappearance of this colonial preference seemed to many thinkers a blow as severe to the colonies as Free Trade in corn would be to English farmers. But the enthusiasts replied that this would not matter, since the 'destiny' of Canada was, 'of course,' to become annexed by the United States.

Thirdly, as Peel by no means carried all his followers with him, the Conservative party broke up as a Parliamentary party. This resulted, not merely in the resignation of Peel and his Cabinet, but in the tenure of power by Whig-Liberals for a scarcely interrupted period of twenty years, and a lack of coherence in the Opposition for all that period, while a corresponding importance accrued to the compact Irish party, which could often decide the fate of a measure.

Peel's own following was now reduced to that portion of his party which was content to do what he did, and to be known as 'Peelites' (particularly the elderly Graham and young Gladstone), while the other and major part of the old Conservatives remained



LIVERPOOL AND MANCHESTER RAILWAY. OPENED 1830.

for some years without a fixed policy, voting in small groups according to their views of the merits of each particular Bill.

This substitution of four or more parties for the old-fashioned two changed very greatly the political habits and code of the House of Commons. However conscientious and acute members might individually be, varied combinations of parties in order to oppose or support a Ministry destroyed the prospect of permanence in the conduct of national business, besides making every measure a compromise to procure the votes of some group.

The leader who beyond all others lamented this disruption of the Conservative party, and thereby of strength in party government, was Disraeli, who thenceforth devoted himself to reconstructing a Conservative party on a basis of permanent modern political principles.

Disraeli held that a minister's plea of personal conversion gave him no right to act contrary to the party's programme, and he began to attack Peel in the House with an assurance felt by the Queen, the Peelites and the middle classes to be most shocking. He declared that the Prime Minister had simply adopted the policy of his professed opponents, he "caught the Whigs bathing and walked away with their clothes." He ought in honour to have crossed over to the ranks of Russell and Palmerston. "In such circumstances a Conservative Government is an organised hypocrisy" (1845).

Peel's personal conduct, indeed, caused more sensation than the actual repeal of the corn duties. Even old Lord Melbourne, now retired from the political world, was startled out of his propriety so far as quite to frighten the Queen by bursting out with—"It's a damned dishonest thing, Ma'am!"

The Conservative members who repudiated Peel's Free Trade now found themselves without political prospects. "We have no supporters, but the constituencies we have not betrayed," cried Disraeli, who held the break-up of the party to be a worse fault than the carrying of Free Trade in corn. Disraeli conceived his own task and career to lie in educating the Conservative party, and the reformed Parliament, up to his own standard of party politics. It occupied the rest of his life.

(ii) THE FAILURE OF CHARTISM

It is probable that Peel's resolve to create a free trade in corn was kindled by a desire to do something to counteract the popular agitation known as 'Chartism.' The working men had quickly discovered that the Reforms of 1832-6 had given political power to their employers without doing anything for them, and they had taken up a cry for a more sweeping and democratic 'reform' which might place political power in their own hands.

The Six Points of the 'People's Charter' of 1838 were: man-

hood suffrage, vote by ballot, annual elections, payment of members, abolition of property qualifications for members, and equal electoral districts according to the numbers of the population (*i.e.* abolition of any consideration of local characteristics in favour of arithmetic alone), a change which would place power among the most crowded towns. From 1838 this *Chartist* movement was vigorous.¹ When the House of Commons refused to receive a petition from the agitators, huge mass meetings were held, some of which broke into riot. Birmingham suffered almost as badly in 1839 as Bristol had in 1831, while South Wales was so violent that Newport was only saved from destruction by troops. For several years a social insurrection in first one, then another, county endangered life and property. When riots were put down, strikes followed, accompanied by much violence and destruction. Foreigners thought that England was about to experience a 'French Revolution.'

But the Chartists fetched an Irish rebel, Fergus O'Connor, to be their leader, whose wild schemes, vanity, quarrelsomeness and unlimited loquacity dissolved their associations and produced nothing but a monster petition to Parliament, which in April 1848 was to be carried to the House of Commons by a mass meeting. Parliament was protected by the police, who refused to permit the immense crowd to 'march,' but suggested that two or three of them might take their petition in a cab. They did as they were told. The petition was found to be 'signed' by many names which were fictitious and ridiculous. O'Connor had already become a drunkard and a lunatic, and the extinction of any cause in which he was allowed to masquerade was a foregone conclusion.

Not that this was relied upon by the Government. They had taken precautions which undoubtedly frightened the mob. The Duke of Wellington had undertaken the protection of London and had placed guns and troops in buildings, none knew where. Civilians were encouraged to enlist as special constables, and troops of them patrolled the peaceable streets, rather disappointed at meeting with nobody to arrest.²

(iii) THE TRIUMPH OF STEAM

The Anti-Corn Law movement had partially distracted attention from the Chartist propaganda, and the middle class urged the artisans to support this movement rather than Chartism.

The middle classes themselves were, in the 'forties, mainly devoting their attention to the recently introduced new mode of transport by railway, so much so that enterprise became speculation, till at last the *Railway Mania* rivalled the celebrated South Sea Bubble. Railways were born on the Tyne coalfield, where,

¹ Described in Kingsley's *Alton Locke*, Disraeli's *Sybil*, Mrs. Gaskell's *Mary Barton* and S. Bamford's *Passages in the Life of a Radical*.

² Amusing description in *Albert Pell*, ch. vii (p. 149).

ever since the civil wars, 'Newcastle roads' had been in use, composed of a pair of wooden rails on which ran trucks or trolleys pulled by horses or (among the mines) sometimes by women.

Engineers had long been trying to construct an inexpensive engine workable by steam to replace the horses, when George Stephenson at last succeeded, in 1814. Having contrived his machine, the next step was to apply it outside the collieries. An Act of Parliament authorised the Stockton and Darlington railway, opened in 1825 by a train of wagons dragged by one engine. A signalman rode on horseback before it, for avoiding of accidents, but the engine proved able to draw its load of ninety tons at the startling pace of twelve or even fifteen miles an hour. This achievement reduced the cost of carriage so much that the price of coal in Darlington dropped by 10s. in the ton.

Several similar railways for goods were next constructed by adventurous companies, from Kent to Scotland, but the first convincing demonstration of their general utility was made by the famous Liverpool and Manchester railway (1830), for which Stephenson constructed a new model engine, the *Rocket*, which provided the pattern or foundation of all later improved types. Trains were now held safe enough to draw passengers.

There ensued a race to construct lines of railways wherever there was commerce or the hope of it. In ten years Parliament sanctioned nearly 2,000 miles of rails by private Acts each of which bestowed on a particular company, besides various financial powers and duties, the power of compulsory land purchase at prices which, if not agreed upon between landowner and railway company, were to be settled by arbitration. In these ten years many companies were formed by subscribers who expected to reap profits at a high percentage, and many owners of land (whether with grief or glee) found themselves compelled to sell portions of ground, usually at very high prices.

Between the years 1842 and 1845 several general Acts of Parliament regulating the use and construction of railways were passed. Every scheme still required to be authorised by a special Act, but the general Act of 1845 contained a number of clauses which were suitable for incorporation in each special Act as standard provisions. One of the general Acts included a provision that at least one train stopping at every station must be run each day with fares not exceeding one penny a mile, *i.e.* for third-class passengers. This was designed to ensure the benefit of the new transport to the poorer passengers and to prevent railways from becoming solely dividend-earning businesses. On the other hand, since the railway promoters complained that the cheapness of carriage upon the inexpensive canals (dug and paid for by an earlier generation) presented a competition which would ruin their own benevolent schemes, and since nobody could imagine that there would ever be commerce enough for both, Parliament habitually allowed



THE GREAT EASTERN ON HER FIRST VOYAGE TO AMERICA. JUNE, 1860.



LIVERPOOL AND MANCHESTER RAILWAY, PARKSIDE STATION.

facing p. 22.

railways to buy up canals in their districts, a proceeding which resulted in the general disuse of the canals except for such heavy loads as coal, which the new company might wish to send by water.

In the meantime, and with greater rapidity, steam machinery had been applied to ships. The first *steamers* ran on the Clyde, the Severn and the Thames, then between Calais and Dover and between Holyhead and Dublin. A company was formed in 1824 for *General Steam Navigation* in our home and neighbouring waters. Though steamers were not at first so swift as sailing ships, they were found to be so safe and regular that Government entrusted the mails to them (1821). These were paddle-boats, having the wheels at the side and a tall funnel. The ships still used their sails as a rule, but resorted to steam paddle-wheels when the wind was unfavourable. As vessels became increasingly built of iron and finally of steel, the use of sails decreased, and on the invention of the screw propeller steam alone became the motive power. All the time the power and speed of the engines were increasing, and when, in 1842, Queen Victoria ventured to travel from Leith to London in the steamer *Trident*, she was surprised to find that it left the sailing ships behind and took only forty-eight hours over the voyage.

The first steamship to cross the Atlantic under steam power alone was a Canadian-built boat supplied with English engines, which in 1833 made the passage from Nova Scotia to Gravesend, with the unheard-of celerity of twenty-two days.

Throughout the 'forties steam navigation was increasing all over the world, famous British steam-ship companies, the Cunard, White Star, Peninsular and Oriental, etc., leading the way in the regular long-voyage commerce which thenceforward poured into every British port such huge supplies of food and of raw material for manufacture as seemed to be inexhaustible throughout the succeeding decades of the century.

During the same period steam power was being increasingly applied to all kinds of machinery. Every large branch of industry—weaving, brewing, printing, pottery, hosiery, leather-work—and indeed most processes in all manufactures, now came to be accomplished by help of steam. Yet the toil of men did not appear to be appreciably lessened but rather increased.

Larger quantities of objects were produced; more coal, iron and steel were required; ever more machines, more furnaces, chimneys and factories arose, with thicker clouds of smoke and steam above and denser crowds of human beings below. Chemists added their discoveries to the resources of industry, and the streams of Lancashire and Yorkshire ran black, brown and purple, and stank; fish, flowers, birds and little wild animals vanished; the sun was hidden by a permanent curtain of smoke over entire districts; there were many places where the trees steadily died from the top downwards,

others where not even a blade of grass could grow; the beauty of Nature was destroyed.

Parts of Staffordshire and Warwickshire, of South Lancashire and Yorkshire, looked as if irruptions of volcanic ash were burying civilisation. Not only ugliness but disease accompanied these triumphs of modern industry, nor is it surprising that values came to be reckoned in terms of money and arithmetic alone. Towns boasted of the density of their population, the numbers of their tall chimneys, and even of the black dirt which indicated their prosperity. "Muck makes money," quoth the Yorkshireman, transferring a farmer's proverb to his smoke-stacks. The 'fifties and 'sixties saw the apogee of this hideous type of materialism.

Contemporary Description.

Letter from Catherine Winkworth (Alderley Edge, January 2, 1858):

"Papa is busy about the terrible distress in Macclesfield . . . the only question is how long the fund can hold out, when there are 17,000 persons to be maintained by charity in some shape, legal and otherwise. Papa's own mill and two of Mr. Brocklehurst's have been working three to four days a week all through, but that is a bare subsistence for the hands, and the other mills have nearly all been stopped. Two began partially this week, and one thinks this state of things *cannot* last much longer."

But it did: her sister comments:—

"The opening of 1858 was a time of great distress throughout the silk manufacturing districts. The French treaty of commerce had much to do with this. My father, true to his Free Trade principles, had worked with Mr. Cobden and others in promoting this treaty; indeed, if I remember rightly, he was the commissioner for the silk trade. But in this case he was decidedly a martyr to his principles; for this treaty gave a blow to the English silk trade from which it never recovered, and my father was one of those most greatly affected by it. After various fluctuations, within the next few years nearly every house in the English silk trade succumbed."

(From *Memorials of Two Sisters, Susanna and Catherine Winkworth*. 1908.)

IV

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

(i) EUROPE (1848 TO 1860)

JUST as the French and Belgian revolution of 1830 had precipitated the great reform of Parliament, so did the more violent continental revolutions of 1848 produce on us their effect, by involving England in the suddenly altered relations of the European States, and Cobden's castle in the air of free international trade combined with entire political isolation dissolved, with true historical irony, as soon as the first half of his ideal was within sight.

The year 1848 was for Europe the sequel of 1789, the discontented classes in every country breaking into revolt against despotic or unpopular governments. It was the reply of the peoples to the 'Holy Alliance' of thirty years earlier which had for so long deprived them of their anticipated liberties. Violence exploded everywhere, from Sicily to Schleswig-Holstein, and from the Seine to the Vistula. Paris first, then Milan, Venice, Naples, Vienna and Berlin broke into revolt, while oppressed kingdoms endeavoured to wrest their freedom from despots restored thirty-three years earlier—Sicily from its incapable Bourbon king, Hungary and Bohemia from the Austrian Emperor, parts of Italy from the dukes whom that Emperor had imposed upon them, Poland from the Russian Tsar. The actual causes were various in each country. In France, the peaceable but commonplace Louis Philippe, whom the people called "*le roi bourgeois*," was as easily pushed from the throne in 1848 as he had been placed upon it in 1830, and fled for refuge to London, as his predecessors had done. Paris then abjured monarchy and proclaimed the *Second Republic*.

The tidings from Paris fired the exasperated subject populations of the Hapsburgs, especially in Hungary and Venetia, so long held down by the severity of that despotic monarchy, which was still directed by Prince Metternich.¹

At the same time Naples and Sicily rose against the cruelties of the sovereign aptly nicknamed 'King Bomba.' The revolts in Milan and other Italian cities were produced, less by acts of tyranny than by the general longing to be free from foreign rule; for the petty sovereigns of Hapsburg or Bourbon descent who reigned as Dukes or Princes in the several little States had been placed there

¹ Who fills the part of villain in Mrs. Browning's pro-Italian poems.

by the Concert of European diplomatists at the Congress of Vienna, but were maintained by Austrian military support. The only native sovereign in all Italy was the Duke of Savoy (Count of Piedmont), whose title was King of Sardinia.

In the German States, each ruled by its own petty sovereign, there was a general desire for more liberal government of a 'constitutional' kind. There was no longer any representative of the old mediæval Empire, Austria having accepted the separate political existence forced upon her by Napoleon, and having transferred the title of *Empire* to the composite of dominions, old and new, ruled despotically from Vienna. But the Hapsburg Emperor and his minister Metternich maintained an alliance with the Prussian King so that the two sovereigns—in reality Metternich—exercised a practical control over the smaller German States. They could do this because they alone possessed troops. Only Hanover had hitherto been exempt from their dictation, because until 1837 Hanover belonged to the British sovereign.

They exercised their power in such ways as forbidding a 'Liberal' Duke to bestow a *constitution* upon his Duchy, or compelling Universities to forbid physical drill (lest the students should learn how to fight), or suppressing newspapers and books which advocated liberty. The Germans discovered that it was useless to convert their local potentates, and now aimed at a union of all Germans against tyrannical Austria. A peaceable *Diet* of politicians and professors met at Frankfort (1848) only to recognise that Austrian armies must always be too strong for unarmed amateurs, and therefore to agree that it would be wise to submit to Prussian control, if Prussia would liberate them from Austria.

This German scheme was not, however, carried into practice for another sixteen years, and even then did not so greatly interest England as did the more vivid crisis in Italy.

"Every educated Englishman" (once said Lord Rosebery) "has two countries—England and Italy." In the middle of the nineteenth century this was no over-statement, and Italian patriotic leaders hoped for practical assistance from the crowd of sympathetic travellers, students, artists, poets, philosophers and novelists.

But the French, too, had long shown a sympathy with the Italians which promised to be more active, their common hatred of Austria forming a political link, so that in 1851 it was generally expected that the new President of the Second French Republic, Louis Napoleon (nephew of the great Napoleon), would give Italy the necessary military help. This expectation revived popular nervousness in England, suspicion of France being stronger than sympathy for Italy, and love of peace stronger than enthusiasm for liberty in foreign countries, especially when it was perceived that the great military power of Russia would support Austria.

Finally, all the good intentions were betrayed by the outbreak of the extraordinary Crimean War.

(ii) PALMERSTON

Melbourne was succeeded as leader of the Whigs by Lord John Russell, brother of the Duke of Bedford, and marked long since by Grey for the eventual chieftainship. He was the party's most skilful adept in the management of political business in Parliament. The *leader* of the House of Commons now inherited an arduous task. The rules and customs of the House were so complicated that close attendance was necessary to master them, while the changes entailed by 1832 had much increased the business. The large number of members and their eagerness over their various interests produced a volume of speeches, resolutions and amendments with which the leader of the House could only be familiar by exercising a sleepless vigilance for many hours at a stretch during prolonged sessions. Only the ambitious could be expected to spend their lives in such a laborious task, whether as ministers or leaders of Opposition.

Russell, Prime Minister in 1846, after Peel's fall, was, for all his parliamentary skill, hardly the most eminent member of his own Cabinet. That position was accorded by general consent to Lord Palmerston, who had already under Melbourne been Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and had shown while in opposition, during Peel's Ministry, talents for practical parliamentary business which had won the admiration of the Houses and of the readers of newspapers.

Henry Temple, Lord Palmerston in the peerage of Ireland (and therefore eligible for a seat in the House of Commons), sprang from a typical family of the lesser nobility which had furnished in the seventeenth century a statesman (better known as the husband of Dorothy Osborne and patron of Swift), and in the eighteenth the patron of Chatham and the mother of the Grenvilles.

He was educated for a political career, and was sent from Harrow to Edinburgh, there to imbibe the orthodox philosophy from Dugald Stewart's own self. In 1807, at the age of twenty-two, he began the long public career which only closed with his death in 1865, his sixth year as Prime Minister. He was not at first ambitious, clinging to the then unimportant post of Secretary at War for nineteen years.¹ But when, having mastered the methods of public business and obtained great social popularity, he became Secretary for Foreign Affairs he showed that he had acquired serious principles of policy. He directed the course of Great Britain in international affairs for periods amounting in all to twenty-seven years, between 1830 and 1865.

The Foreign Office was less dependent on Parliament than were most other departments of Government. It was recognised that

¹ A Secretary *at* War to supplement the Secretary for War was an invention of Pitt's. Vol. III. of this *History*, ch. xxiv (p. 223).

the country's relations with other States need not, and should not, vary with every change in party Cabinets at home. And when at length the pressure of popular sentiment made itself felt in the Cabinet's treatment of foreign policy, Palmerston was actually strengthened. His dashing, robust personality and his almost equally dashing political methods captivated the public, and the knowledge of his popularity weighed with the Cabinet, the Houses, and foreign Governments.

The root principles of Palmerston's policy were much the same as Canning's—to maintain not only the security but the dignity of this country and its claim to a leading voice in the settlement of international questions, to encourage liberty, to respect treaties, and to guard against military ambitions in other countries. It was his habit to indicate clearly to any foreign Government the course desired by this country, and in case of any hesitation in complying to enforce his demands by something of the nature of a threat—usually the appearance of a British squadron. This he was able to do because, in his time, our navy was unapproached by that of any other country, and the presence of a British squadron might be counted upon in all waters, Mediterranean, Chinese or Indian, West or East.

When the Chinese Government (in 1840) made an excuse to blockade the foreign merchants in Canton, a treaty port, on the plea that the sale of Indian opium was contrary to their new prohibition laws, Palmerston supported the British representative in resisting, and directed the fleet to give the Chinese a lesson.

The Opposition protested that this was "an opium war" to force a wicked drug upon an innocent people: Palmerston informed them that the Chinese, who cultivated opium themselves, simply wanted to institute a monopoly contrary to treaty, and that for us to restrict the Indian growers of opium—a commercial crop raised for other countries besides China—would be unjust. Let China erect proper customs houses where she could herself enforce her own regulations by the recognised methods of tariffs, instead of hectoring an independent State as if it were a vassal, and that State British India. The final result was the cession of the island of Hong-Kong to this country as a mercantile centre, somewhat reminiscent of early Bombay or even of Calais. Similar but minor incidents occurred in the Mediterranean, where the weak and disorderly Governments at Naples and Athens under various excuses endeavoured to plunder persons who were British subjects. Stern demands were presented for compensation, under the guns of the Mediterranean squadron, and when the Opposition waxed indignant at such tyrannical treatment of 'weak nations,' Palmerston replied that weakness does not warrant insolence and dishonesty.

The presence of a permanent Mediterranean fleet, based on Malta, was, moreover, a clear intimation to Austria and Russia that neither Italy nor the Turkish Empire was to be absorbed by

either of them. Those were at that time the danger points of Europe, and France had as keen an interest in them as England.

The probability that the three despotic Governments (Russia, Austria, Prussia) would continue to combine to shackle liberty in Europe was felt by political thinkers to be best countered by a friendly understanding between Great Britain and France such as had steadily grown stronger since 1815, and, having survived the overthrow of Charles X in 1830, might be considered as permanent. Nevertheless, the nation and Palmerston himself were habitually suspicious of aggression on the part of France. This had been one reason for Palmerston's strong support of Leopold as King of the Belgians in 1830.

When the 1848 revolutions broke out, the Russian Tsar, Nicholas I, the stern brother of the erratic Alexander I, promptly suppressed the Polish movement and then ordered his army into Hungary, and put down the Hungarian revolt for the benefit of his brother monarch at Vienna.

Palmerston's personal behaviour during these events was extraordinary, and in anybody else would be condemned as unconstitutional. This country was officially on the usual terms of amity with both Russia and Austria; and Palmerston had refused to 'recognise' Hungary as an independent republic; he knew that the vehement popular sympathy for Kossuth exhibited at English banquets and meetings was merely an ebullition of sentiment, and by no means signified that the crowds desired to expend their blood, or even their funds, on behalf of Hungarian patriots. But neither the Hungarians nor the Austrian and Russian ministers were likely to understand this, and the Foreign Secretary's behaviour was hardly calculated to enlighten them. They knew how British feeling lay, for Palmerston had extended powerful protection to a number of refugees, Poles and Hungarians, who had escaped into Turkish territory. The Tsar had required the Porte to hand them over or else to incarcerate them, on pain of war. But the English Ambassador, the famous Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, had, by Palmerston's direction, prevented that sacrifice by telling the Sultan that Great Britain would support him. Not content with this fine exertion of British prestige, the Foreign Secretary proceeded to receive Kossuth in the Foreign Office ("in my own house," he protested to the Cabinet), and openly intimated his pleasure when insult and violence were vented in the streets on an Austrian general. These were 'unfriendly acts' on which the Austrian minister officially remonstrated.¹

It was intolerable that even the 'strongest' Foreign Secretary should by his wilful conduct entangle the country in a foreign

¹ General Haynau had been peculiarly ferocious in punishing Hungarian rebels and flogged a number of women. He insisted on visiting London, and was mobbed by the men of Barclay's brewery, who howled at him as 'General Hyena' and thrashed him.

quarrel, yet Russell shrank from dealing with his formidable colleague and betook himself to the Queen for assistance. They constrained Palmerston to write a letter of apology to Vienna, but after they had sanctioned it he added some phrases which turned it into a fresh insult. Apparently his resentment of his official chief's interference was so great as to blind him to the unconstitutional nature of his own attitude to the Queen.

Victoria was not a sovereign who tolerated indignities, and she drew up a brief memorandum addressed to the Prime Minister explaining precisely what she expected of the Foreign Secretary. Russell supposed that on reading this rebuke Palmerston would resign. As he did not, but only made earnest personal apologies to the Prince Consort, the Prime Minister waited till some fresh blunder should allow of a public exposure.

This did not occur till the close of 1851, when Palmerston nearly compromised the Government's relations with France. The political stroke of Louis Napoleon in Paris, known as the *coup d'état*, had given him the control of the Republic. The proper behaviour for foreign Governments was to wait to see how the French nation would decide on this event before expressing any opinion. Yet Palmerston immediately expressed at Paris his satisfaction without consulting the Queen or the Prime Minister.

As the French endorsed the proceedings of their Prince-president no harm resulted, but the independent action of the minister might have been very dangerous and could hardly be passed over, so, as no popular sentiment on the matter existed in London, Russell ventured to disown and upbraid his unruly colleague in the House. He read aloud the Queen's memorandum (a remarkable breach of constitutional propriety), and thus practically dismissed him, to the joy of continental Governments. German sentiment was plainly indicated by the refrain of a comic ditty—

“Hat der Teufel einen Sohn
So ist er sicher Palmerston.”

But in his cheerful conceit Russell had pulled down the main pillar of his Government, for within two months Palmerston took revenge by carrying an amendment to a Government Bill: (as he described it) “Had my tit for tat with John Russell, I turned him out.”

The results exhibited the weakest points of our parliamentary constitution, for the Whig, or Liberal, party was now so far in disruption that no leader could command a majority in the Houses. The Tories also were grouped in two opposed sections, the ‘Peelites,’ who were devoted to the memory of their old leader and particularly to his *Free Trade*, and the rest of the Conservatives, who disliked the Free Trade principle as much as before, led by Derby and Disraeli. The latter party accepted office in 1852, but, as they were out-voted by all the other parties in alliance, were

compelled to resign after a few months. It was hardly possible to found a government upon negation alone, but the conciliatory Lord Aberdeen constructed a coalition of Whigs, Liberals and Peelites together, which included Russell, Palmerston and Gladstone. It lasted two years, but fell to pieces owing to its incompetent management of the Crimean War.

V

INDIA. FROM BENTINCK TO DALHOUSIE

AFTER the viceroyalty of the Marquis of Hastings (1813-23) it was obvious that the English power was the strongest in India and that it was able to annex or to control native States if it chose to do so. Actually, Governors-General were dependent upon the Directors of the East India Company for funds and upon the Board of Control for India for sanction, and they were obliged also to use their authority in India circumspectly, for fear of offending the instruments through which they ruled. These consisted of (a) the Company's civilian staff, (b) the Company's troops, (c) the King's troops. The officers of the latter took rank above the Company's officers, and their men also were British. The Company's regiments were formed of Sepoys with British officers who had enlisted under the Company, not the Crown.

The India Board and the Company Directors were apt, like most Englishmen, to forget that the Past, which by Englishmen was then generally disregarded, was in India generally remembered. The Board wanted economy, the Company wanted commerce. They made no effort to impress any general lines of policy upon successive Governors-General, save the usual injunctions for economy, but Governors-General often regarded themselves as benevolent autocrats, ambitious of civilising a backward people.

When that benevolent autocrat, Lord William Bentinck (1828-35), put down robbery and massacre by suppressing Mahrattas, Pindaries and Thugs, or when he maintained even-handed justice through English judges who could neither be bribed nor bullied, the native population rejoiced and paid its taxes cheerfully, but it was otherwise when he put steamers on holy rivers and tried to begin a system of education.

When Lord Hardinge (1844-8) forbade the long-established practice of *suttee* (the burning of women upon the funeral pyre) there was considerable resentment, though not among all classes, for the practice was already grievous to many Hindus who dared not resist it themselves.

But when Lord Dalhousie (1848-56) ceased to recognise the inheritance of native kingdoms by adopted sons, and declared that in default of natural heirs a State must "lapse" to the supreme Government, discontent arose universally, for Hindu law and

religion accepted adoption as a perfect equivalent of actual fatherhood. Dalhousie, however, paid no more regard to their feeling than a Plantagenet king would have done, but proceeded to annex States when this imitation of feudalism gave him opportunity. The shock which his annexations gave to native confidence in English justice was severe, and the discontent was the more dangerous because the tradition of English military supremacy had just then received a severe shock in Afghanistan.

Between Bentinck and Hardinge two disastrous Governors-General, Lord Auckland and Lord Ellenborough, had compromised the honour of this country by calamitous warfare and unjust conquest (1836-44).

Auckland's appointment was a party job of Melbourne's, who revoked the wiser nomination already made by Peel in order to gratify his popular friend. But Auckland's gay spirits scarcely veiled his shallow character, and he was as wax in the hands of Palmerston. The latter, Foreign Minister, was at that time greatly alarmed by the rapid advance of Russia in Asia. She had reached Persia; Persia was attacking Herat in Afghanistan; after Herat would come Cabul, and after that, the Indus, and then the Ganges. With sublime disregard of geography, Palmerston desired Auckland to get Cabul under his control, and the Governor-General amiably obeyed.

As a matter of fact, the enormous spaces between Persia and Northern India, filled with mountains, rivers, deserts and military tribesmen, provided barrier enough between Russia and India long to outlast Palmerston's day, and besides, the Persians desisted from their attack. But Auckland had already devised a grand scheme which he could not bring himself to cancel. First, he sent envoys, Burns and Macnaughten, to negotiate with the Ameer of Cabul and persuade him to make a treaty against Russia; secondly, in order to provide an Ameer to negotiate with, he directed a pretender to be established at Cabul by English troops; thirdly, for the sake of this campaign be prepared to get control of the Indus by breaking recent treaties made with the local chiefs, and fourthly, the route of the army was directed by Auckland on a plan which is described as "that of a lunatic rather than of a sane statesman." Moreover, the generals were several times changed; they were assured that there would really be no fighting; the officers were encouraged to take their families with them; stores were scanty and guns too few, "in fact all reasonable precautions were neglected and many foolish things were done."

The brilliant capture of the first fortress, Ghaznee, by the heroism of Durand and his engineers, only made things worse by encouraging the foolish optimism of Palmerston. Burns (who had already advised strongly against the expedition) and Macnaughten both irritated the natives and were murdered. A universal and deter-

mined resistance met the invaders. The forces were divided, General Nott being sent to Kandahar and Elphinstone to Cabul. The latter was old and too ill to understand his predicament; he reached Cabul only to find himself hopelessly surrounded, and actually purchased permission to retreat by surrendering the guns and muskets. The women and the wounded and the dying Elphinstone himself had to be surrendered to one of the princes, who promised to protect them, and kept his word. The disarmed troops then had to retreat towards India, the fortress of Jalalabad at the mouth of the Khyber being still held by Sale's brigade. Bands of Afghans watched and surrounded them and gradually shot down the entire force, deliberately leaving one wounded man, Dr. Brydon, to carry into the fortress the fearful tale of failure and slaughter.

Happily General Nott handled his half of the expedition so successfully as to command respect. By unremitting caution and constant activity Nott contrived to hold both Quetta and Kandahar and to control the tribes of that immense district for over three years, so that when Ellenborough replaced Auckland and despatched Pollock with a fresh army to Cabul, Nott was able to meet him and to rescue the prisoners and avenge the murders of Burns and Macnaughten. On their return to India this second expedition could be regarded as victorious.

Unfortunately Ellenborough thought to impress the peoples of India by holding a number of ostentatious *durbars* and rejoicings, which were very costly and yet so ill-managed as to provoke ridicule. Nor was he content with having concluded the Afghan adventure, but began to believe himself a born conqueror and set about a new conquest which should be an easy one. He adopted Auckland's views about the Indus and was not ashamed to break treaties lately made with the Ameers (or chiefs) of Sind. Having obtained from home the services of a very able general, Sir Charles Napier, he imbued him with these views of conquest, contrived to provoke a petty quarrel with the Ameers, and then hurled at them the energetic Napier with strong forces. The conquest of Sind was a brilliant feat of arms, the battle of Meeanee (1843), in particular, being a remarkable pitched battle. Napier sent word of his success in the famous pun: *Peccavi* (I have sinned). But the origin of the war was so unjust that it was difficult to exult in the triumph, and the famous Sir James Outram, who had been British Commissioner in Sind, went home to plead for justice to the defeated chiefs. It was, however, impossible to undo what had been done: the sole atonement possible was to govern the new province well.

Ellenborough continued his exhibitions of vanity, his bombastic proclamations and expensive displays, and finally offended the Company mortally by preferring military men to the Company's civilian agents and even giving the gallant Nott one of the best-paid posts. The Directors, therefore, recalled him in 1844. One

of his wiser actions was a step taken towards the abolition of slavery. He decreed that the law and judges of India were no longer to recognise slavery as a legal status. This did not forbid the people to have slaves, but by preventing any claims at law about the ownership of slaves it greatly reduced their value and therefore their numbers.

After the incompetence of Auckland and the follies of Ellenborough the next two Governors-General, Hardinge and Dalhousie, were faced by some grave problems. Lord Hardinge was compelled to fight the Sikhs in the Punjab, who made war on him in the cheerful hope of plundering Delhi.

Sir Hugh Gough, though hampered by lack of artillery, defeated the Sikhs in a brief campaign of four pitched battles, of which Sohraon is the most famous (1846). The Sikhs then gave in, and Lord Hardinge arranged for an English administration of the Punjab, at first under Sir Henry Lawrence, later under his brother, Sir John Lawrence.

When, in 1848, Lord Dalhousie arrived to relieve Lord Hardinge, the outgoing Governor-General assured him that he would not have to fire a gun in India for the next seven years. It is a famous instance of the impossibility to Europeans of reading the native mind, for the Sikhs in three months were in revolt, beginning with the deliberate assassination of two English officials in Mooltan.

For the second time Lord Gough invaded the Punjab, took Mooltan, defeated the Sikhs at Chilianwalla at a heavy cost in lives, and again, and decisively, at Gujerat (1849).

Dalhousie now annexed the Punjab and established there a knot of picked men to deal summarily with its peculiar problems. John Lawrence, John Nicholson and Herbert Edwardes were among the brilliant officers who disarmed the native troops and then made of that land of turmoil and tyranny the model province of India.

Immediately after the pacification of the Punjab, Lord Dalhousie was obliged to deal with the furthest eastern frontier. The King of Burma had for many years been indulging in systematic insults and injuries to the British. As all friendly overtures were rejected it became necessary in 1852 to teach the arrogant Burmese Government a lesson, and Dalhousie himself supervised a well-prepared and perfectly successful expedition which took Pegu and Rangoon. He annexed the entire province by the sea and established an efficient government in it.

Thus Lord Dalhousie had linked together an extensive and coherent English dominion. Unfortunately he had devoted less attention and comprehension to the situation on the Ganges, the very core of the English position in India, than to the more recent extensions to west and east.

VI

THE CRIMEAN WAR. THE INDIAN MUTINY

THE majority of the nation was not principally interested in party politics during the decade 1846-56, for it was beset by a series of more absorbing anxieties.

A threat of famine, commercial disasters, a scare of possible foreign invasion, rebellion in Ireland and the dread of rebellion in England overshadowed the public in the four years 1846-50. Then came the more cheerful excitement of the Great Exhibition.

The Irish famine and English scarcity passed away with the lapse of time.

The commercial crisis arose out of the general enthusiasm for railways. The success of those which were first completed caused everybody to desire to join in these undertakings. It was supposed that they would stimulate trade miraculously, pay enormous dividends to shareholders and, finally, that the mere buying and selling of the shares would provide fortunes. One Hudson who did thus acquire, for a time, immense wealth, was called 'the railway king' and his example encouraged a host of persons to speculate frantically in railway shares. It was calculated that there were over 1,300 railways, making or projected, proposing to spend, between them, 700 millions of money.

The result was a universal borrowing from the banks all over the country, which then betook themselves to borrowing from the Bank of England. But the Bank, tied by Peel's Act of 1844 to definite limits, was legally unable to assist its clients with credits as far as they desired, and a sort of financial deadlock set in; firms and banks, therefore, were unable to get sufficient coin and notes to discharge their obligations though they had ample property of other kinds which they could not turn into currency. In consequence these banks and firms were going into bankruptcy and dragging innumerable families to ruin.¹

The crisis suddenly ceased when Russell and his Chancellor of the Exchequer authorised the Bank of England to issue more advances to borrowers of obvious solvency, promising a parliamentary act of indemnity. The mere knowledge that the Bank

¹ Excellent description in Stanley Weyman's *Ovington's Bank* of the crisis in a western county (Shropshire), and in Mottram's *Our Mr. Dormer* of progressive prosperity in an eastern county (Norfolk).

now would furnish enough notes allayed the panic, credit revived and runs on banks ceased.

The International Exhibition of 1851, the most famous of its tribe, was due to the Prince Consort. He believed that an actual acquaintance with each other would profoundly benefit, intellectually and materially, the different populations of the Queen's dominions and of the world. Such an experience of friendly co-operation and exchange would, he hoped, do much to abolish such jealousy and ill-will as sprang from ignorant prejudice. Certainly for England, committed now to a popular mode of government, it was of prime importance that her people should experience a vivid and rapid object-lesson on the World.

"England was looking" (said *The Times*, ten years later) "with not a little incredulity, and even apathy in some quarters, to the Exhibition in Hyde Park; expecting not very much from it, but one thing, at all events—the substitution of peace for war, and the arts of peace for those of war by all civilised nations." The assumption of the ease and simplicity of this ideal is characteristic of 1860.

Hardly had the death of Peel (1850) and of the Duke of Wellington (1852) removed the most striking figures in the nation when a Russo-Turkish war began which entangled this country and France in the Crimean War (1854–6).

(i) THE CRIMEAN WAR

In its origin the Crimean War was but one phase among many wars waged between the Tsars and the Sultans during two centuries. That England and France participated in it to the point of attacking Russia in the Black Sea was not according to the deliberate intentions of these three Powers, neither can it be accredited to the artful machinations of "the wily Turk." The English Prime Minister, Aberdeen, afterwards confessed that we (*i.e.* he) had 'drifted' into it. It was the outcome of ministerial ignorance and indecision.

Like all the Tsars, Nicholas I followed the ancient policy of countering any threat of revolution within his empire by engaging in war to occupy the attention of those classes whom a Tsar must conciliate. Past Tsars had thus made vast conquests, engulfed Poland, reached the Baltic and the Black Seas and passed the Caspian. Further extension along the coasts of the Baltic was barred by military and naval States; eastwards Asiatic deserts and mountains would have to be conquered; but to the south the Turkish empire offered a more promising sphere, and the lure of Constantinople was powerful.

But for nearly a century the arrival of the Russian power on the Mediterranean had been steadily blocked by either England or France, and in 1852 the two States were allied for this purpose.

From 1851 Nicholas I regarded Napoleon III as a hateful enemy, taking the proclamation of the new French empire as a personal insult. The Sultan had for some time been conciliating the French in hopes of obtaining their support against the Russians. The Tsar and the new French Emperor found a suitable point of rivalry in the permanent quarrel which existed at Jerusalem over the custody of the Christian Holy Places, between the Greek Church, protected by Russia, and the Latin Church, protected by France.

Nicholas considered that he could easily overwhelm Turkey and France, if only Great Britain would remain neutral, and made plain proposals to the English Ambassador for a joint control of the Turkish empire: "We have on our hands a sick man, a very sick man," he said, and explained how disastrous it would be unless Russia and England arranged for his inheritance: let England take Egypt and Crete, and Russia control the Balkan provinces.

Long before this, Nicholas had sounded Aberdeen himself about the Turkish empire. The Tsar had paid a solemn visit to the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, in 1841, when Aberdeen, then a young man, was Foreign Secretary in Peel's Cabinet. The Tsar perfectly understood that in this constitutionally governed country the ministers, and not the monarch, controlled policy. He therefore expressed his conviction that if Russia and England should agree, no other Power would dare to object to their proceedings: it was certain, he said, that the Turkish empire must collapse very soon.

But British policy had been, for a long while, ever since Pitt, to maintain the Turkish empire for fear of something worse. Either Russia or Austria in control of Constantinople and the two Straits would be worse for both Britain and France, for either would certainly obstruct commerce with the Black Sea, the Levant and Egypt, whereas the Porte could usually be managed.

Their dread of Russia and Austria was the reason for the alliance of France and Britain in the Mediterranean, and for their support of the Greeks, whom Russia, the patron of the Slav races in the Balkan peninsula, would never help.

Aberdeen, therefore, when the Tsar talked to him, was well aware that England could never support the Russian plan, but he was too cautious to do anything but listen respectfully, so that Nicholas supposed him to assent.

The partition of Turkey was, however, put off by the revolutions in Europe and the rule of Palmerston in the English Foreign Office, and not until Aberdeen was Prime Minister did the opportunity appear to arrive. By that time, too, Wellington had died, and from the repeal of the Corn Laws till the Great Exhibition the English nation had been loudly informing the world that its one desire was Peace.

The Exhibition of 1851, then, produced some effects which its originator, the Prince Consort Albert, had certainly not foreseen.

That wonderful display of Arts and Industries had not only revealed to the nation the possibilities of its own factories, but had revealed to foreigners the amazing wealth and no less amazing peaceableness of the English. Envy and cupidity were aroused as well as the traditional contempt for a "nation of shopkeepers." Moreover, the public speeches of statesmen and the budgets of Chancellors of Exchequer took for granted prolonged peace. It was not to be imagined that so commercial and thrifty a people, with an army so small and no machinery of war, would ever fight again, at all events on land.

When, then, the next piece of Russian bullying was met by the Porte with resentment, and by the French and English ministers with remonstrances, the Tsar felt that these strong words meant nothing. In vain did Queen Victoria, on the one hand, hint to Aberdeen that the increasing strength of the remonstrances might exasperate the Tsar into the very action dreaded; equally in vain did Palmerston, on the other hand, urge that the Tsar should be plainly told that if he crossed the Danube it would mean war with England as well as Turkey. Aberdeen still hoped that a little further 'bluff' would make the autocrat draw back, and still had no intention of going to war or preparing for it.

Austria, sleepless in her watch on Russia, offered to mediate. The diplomatists assembled at Vienna and their couriers hurried to and fro on the long roads to Petersburg and Constantinople with the successive schemes (there were eleven in all) of the four Powers—Austria and Prussia, Great Britain and France. As the Tsar and the Porte naturally suggested alterations in every one, this process might continue indefinitely, but unless it could be prolonged for the lifetime of Nicholas it would hardly establish peace. At length Austria formulated Four Points: the Tsar accepted three of them—those which would satisfy Austria; but negatived the other, which mattered to England and France: it was a clause to keep the Black Sea perpetually 'neutral.' As Russia was constructing a great naval harbour at Sevastopol and had a fleet there already, it was hardly to be expected that the Tsar would accept the attitude of a beaten potentate without even a fight.

Already a Russian army had entered the Principalities¹ of Moldavia and Wallachia (June 1853) and threatened to cross the Danube, on a "short and glorious march" to Constantinople.

The English and French fleets moved to Besika Bay, just outside the Dardanelles: the Russians crossed the Danube, Turkey declared war; the Allied fleets slowly moved towards the Black Sea, but before they reached it the Russian fleet in that sea fell upon the Turkish navy, off Sinope, and sent it to the bottom.

The tidings produced a wave of popular fury in England which

¹ The Principalities (now Rumania) were a part of the Turkish empire, but the Tsar had by treaty a sort of protective right over their (native) princes which he used as an excuse to interfere.

compelled Aberdeen to declare war (March 1854), and Napoleon III did the same. He at least had attained his desire. The two Allies despatched their troops as soon as possible to Varna, to help the Turks, but the latter had already defeated the Russians decisively.

By this time an Austrian army was lying in wait in Transylvania; the Russians retreated behind their own frontier, the river Pruth, and the Austrians then promptly occupied the Principalities. Austria had skilfully made Great Britain and France pull her chestnut out of the fire and could now sheathe her claws and leave them to deal with the blaze. While the Tsar informed his court that "the ingratitude of Austria staggered Europe," the two Allies, perceiving that the relief to Turkey was but temporary, resolved to attack Russia herself at Sevastopol, the strongly fortified base (as it was believed to be) which enabled her to dominate the Black Sea.

The English and French armies, therefore, were conveyed across the stormy sea to land on the Crimea (September 1854). The generals in command were as entirely ignorant as the ministers in London and Paris of the conditions of the place they were to attack.

As a matter of fact, the fortifications of Sevastopol were merely outlined, and the invaders' best move would have been to assault at once. But the Allied generals proceeded deliberately and the enemy made good use of time. A brilliant engineer, Todleben, set thousands of men to raise earthworks of remarkable strength, while the Russian general cheerfully scuttled the new Russian fleet in order to block the harbour.

The Allies next took up another position so as to enable the British fleet to support them, but had to fight the battle of the river Alma on their march and that of Balaclava on arrival. They had just dug themselves in when the Russians attacked them a third time at Inkerman. All this time Sevastopol was being fortified. Then came the fearful winter tempests.

The much-admired scholarship of 'Athenian Aberdeen' failed to remind him of the climatic terrors of the Black Sea coasts. His Minister of War, Newcastle, had never possessed any knowledge of military administration. Lord Raglan, the commander, had had no experience since, as a young man, he had been an aide-de-camp to Wellington at Waterloo; if he had some distant memories of the Peninsula they were the wrong ones, for he failed to perceive that he had to take a Torres Vedras, not to hold one.

In consequence, the army had been despatched with nothing but a summer equipment, and though winter supplies were sent after it, the connecting links were omitted. A great storm sank some ships with all the hay, the horses starved, vast stores lay at Balaclava haven while the gallant troops for lack of transport froze and famished on the icy heights above.

Personal changes made little difference. The French general died early in the siege, and Lord Raglan some time later, but their

immediate successors were not men of wisdom. The tidings of the fearful sufferings of the army came to England in letters and were made generally public by the War Correspondent of *The Times*, which paper by its reports conducted a vigorous campaign against official stupidity. The Tsar Nicholas said: "I have still two generals—General January and General February." But in spite of their sufferings and their commanders, the Allied armies had continually defeated the Russians, and instead of a "short and glorious" war, the strength of the Russian realm was already feeling the strain of its own enormous distances. Early in March 1855 Nicholas died: "General March" was the title of the grim cartoon in *Punch*.

As soon as the news of the appalling lack of medical provision for the troops arrived in England, after the battle of the Alma, a leading hospital nurse and organiser, Miss Florence Nightingale, offered to go to Scutari, on the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus, and there organise the hospitals. They were at the time hardly more than temporary and insanitary makeshifts. With the aid of Sidney Herbert, just then Secretary *at War*, she went out with a devoted band of thirty-four nurses, and found that she had to arrange for 10,000 patients as well as to cause the hospitals to be reconstructed. From her efforts sprang the science and practice of military hospitals as well as a great reform of nursing and hospital provision in England generally.

As the new Tsar, Alexander II, could hardly open his reign by a complete surrender, and as nothing else would satisfy the Allies, the war went on till, in September 1855, the heroism of the troops and the determination of the new French marshal, Pélissier, accomplished the storming of Sevastopol. But the Russian withdrawal was left unmolested, while in Armenia the long and heroic defence of Kars by Turkish troops under the English general, Williams, was unsustained and ended in their surrender, famine-stricken, to the Russians. There was no one, in London or the Crimea, to see the war as a whole, in the Wellington manner.

Both sides now had won barren triumphs, both were sensible of exhaustion: yet negotiation was slow, and only in March 1856 was a Treaty signed at Paris.

This *Treaty of Paris* cleared up the Balkan situation so far as statements could do so. The independence and integrity of the Ottoman empire were formally recognised and the Turkish State was admitted into "the concert of Europe." The Sultan endorsed certain reforms in the treatment of his Christian subjects, but only on the clear understanding that the other Powers were never to interfere in his empire, which meant that they were not to take any steps to make him put the reforms into practice. Serbia and the two Principalities obtained rather more independence—guaranteed by the Powers; the Black Sea was henceforth to be neutral

and the Dardanelles closed to ships of war, the Sultan himself being charged with the watch over the Straits.

Several international problems were stated or debated in this Conference at Paris.¹ The Tsar Alexander forbade Poland to be touched upon, but the condition of Italy was expounded by Cavour, thanks to the sympathy of the English diplomatist, Lord Clarendon. The topic which most concerned this country was that of maritime rules in time of war, a topic habitually handled as a reprimand to Great Britain by other Powers.

As to this, *Four Points* were agreed upon: (1) the abolition of privateering; (2) that a neutral flag covers all (even enemy) goods, except contraband of war; (3) that neutral goods (unless contraband of war) are not liable to capture, even under an enemy flag; (4) that blockade must be effectively enforced if it is to be recognised.

This was the only occasion on which Great Britain had ever had the law of the sea laid down for her. The rules were for the advantage of neutral traders, and already Great Britain and France had endorsed by their practice the second and third. What *contraband of war* might be Clarendon refused to define, insisting that it must be left for definition until war arose. Great Britain made a more important effort to procure a rule for arbitration before declaration of war, but without success. Even the *Four Points* of maritime war, known ever since as the *Declaration of Paris* (1856), proved to be more drastic than all States would accept, the United States refusing to abolish privateering unless Britain would agree that private property upon the sea of every kind should be treated as inviolable. This was a point which provoked fierce controversy in 1914.

It is not surprising that the Treaty of Paris was unpopular in this country—few treaties have ever with us been otherwise. Nevertheless the apparent humiliation of Russia was considerable. As for the future, opinions were divided. To forbid Russia to float warships (other than police boats) upon the Black Sea was insulting. "It cannot last," the Russian Ambassador is reported to have said to the French Emperor. "It will last ten years," Napoleon III replied. A German diplomatist expressed to an English one his surprise at our barring out Russia from Constantinople; it would have been a nut she could never have cracked, he said, and every ship she launched on the Mediterranean would have been a hostage to us: "If a dog and a fish have a quarrel to settle, the fish must pray God that the dog should come into the water."²

The permanent benefit derived by us from the Crimean War was not the weakening of Russia, which now steadily pushed forward in Asia, but the beginning of a more friendly temper between England and France, stimulated by the commercial treaty between

¹ See *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, I. pp. 391-5.

² *Mem. of Sir R. Morier*, I. p. 361.

them negotiated by Gladstone and Cobden in 1860, which became a fresh starting-point for trade and friendliness.

(ii) THE INDIAN MUTINY

Essentially, the Mutiny was part of the price which the English paid for carrying our civilisation to India. But it attained its painful proportions through the inefficiency of English generals whose default had to be made good by the self-sacrifice of heroes.

The causes of the Mutiny were manifold. The recent prohibitions of savage practices—of suttee, infanticide, thuggee, human sacrifices—were also blows at the priesthood which for so many ages had controlled the Hindu population. The provisions for the education of natives, and for the employment (to some extent) of natives by the Government, were capable of being represented as undermining the *caste* systems which sustained that priesthood, while the newly introduced telegraphs, steam-boats and railways were to the masses manifestly devilry. In India a religious cry has usually arisen over any incident provoking nervousness or even curiosity. It was now rumoured that the *Sircar* (the Government) intended to compel Hindus to become Christians.

The annexations of Sinde, the Punjab and a few smaller States were felt by all the deposed robbers concerned as oppressions. The annexation of the kingdom of Oude, which was commanded by the Government at home,¹ was more dangerous than any of the others and was carried out by Dalhousie with misgivings, because it was certain to offend numbers of the Sepoys. Oude had long been an 'Augean stable' of brutal misgovernment and foul crime, far too bad for the advice of a British Resident to produce the least effect, and Dalhousie had intended to take the government into his own hands while preserving in name the native royalty. But he had no option save to obey the command from home. This was his last official act (1856), and he had no time to disarm the large native army of Oude.

His successor, Lord Canning (son of the great George Canning), unhappily took no steps to that end; he was, indeed, told by the departing Dalhousie that he considered India to be in a peaceful condition. A notable proof of the optimism of successive Governors-General is that, though they kept in Delhi an immense arsenal stored with all kinds of munitions, they kept only a native guard over it under a very few English officers. The camp of British troops was established on the Ridge outside the city. There were plenty of white residents inside Delhi, official or commercial, but their safety depended upon prestige alone. In the city dwelt in squalid state the descendant of the Moguls, a miserable old man to whom the Company continued to pay a kindly pension. Events were to show that he or his son might yet serve as figure-head for

¹ Palmerston, Prime Minister; Wood at the Board of Control.

a violent soldiery, as had so often been seen in older history. What Dalhousie had wished to reform was the Company's Bengal army, and he had urged the Directors to attend to its inefficient and dangerous condition, but they paid no attention. One ruinous fault was the custom of promotion by seniority alone, so that generals were always old and sometimes even imbecile. The Home Government incidentally caused the proportion of the Crown (white) troops to be usually far too small by utilising the King's regiments in India as expeditionary troops for China or Persia. The Sepoys, therefore, were, and perceived themselves to be, uncontrolled. The recent disaster in Afghanistan had disastrously undermined their respect for their British officers and the Indian Government; the rumours which reached them from the Crimea in 1856-7 represented the Russians as victorious. Even the generosity with which Dalhousie had treated the Sepoys was ascribed to his being afraid of them.

It was unfortunate that Canning began his tenure of power by an announcement that in future men enlisting must hold themselves ready to go to any part of the Indian dominions (including Burma) if required. Canning did not understand, and his better-informed secretariate never told him, that to the Hindu a voyage on the sea was sacrilegious because it broke his caste. Nor could he guess that the re-arming of the army with rifles instead of muskets would involve a further and most horrible outrage on the feelings of both Hindus and Mohammedans. The cartridges for the new Enfield rifle were greased, and in order to charge his gun the soldier had to tear off with his teeth the paper top. It was quickly rumoured among the troops that the grease was made of the fat of cows (sacrilege to the Hindu) and of pigs (pollution to the Moslem). It is surprising that such insults to the religion of the native troops should have been overlooked, because already mutinies had occurred, four in thirteen years, on account of religious nervousness.

The Government, learning of the horror of the soldiers, publicly denied the fact, but was not believed. In truth such a compound had actually been used at Woolwich, where some unknown official must have been culpably negligent.

The consequence of issuing those cartridges was a series of regimental mutinies in the early months of 1857, put down by the officers in the usual manner, until at last the mutiny at Meerut, in May, proved decisive. The revolting troops shot their officers and then hurried away, in fear of punishment, towards Delhi, forty miles off, to take refuge behind its strong walls.

Now was exhibited the consequence of senility in the higher command. Of the seven generals on whom in turn the responsibility suddenly fell, six were incapable. The commander-in-chief was a carpet-soldier foisted into lucrative office by a political job in England: he duly set off from his pleasant retreat at Simla to his proper post but died of cholera on the way. The second in

command, Barnard, also died; the third, an invalid, passed the command on to the fourth, the vacillating and timid Wilson, who took command of the troops upon the Ridge above Delhi only to prevent them from moving into danger.

The fifth commander, the general at Meerut, was still more 'prudent,' his sole idea was to keep his remaining white soldiers safe in their quarters, although the officers implored permission to lead their men and guns in pursuit after the decamping rebels.

The tidings of the impunity of the Meerut mutineers, of their unchecked entry into Delhi, their proclamation of the hereditary heir of the Moguls as Sultan, and the orgy of riot and slaughter in Delhi, of course spread rapidly and fired the multitude of Sepoy troops into rebellion throughout Oude and in several districts of Central India.

Only Agra, where there were some 600 British troops, and Lucknow, where was Sir Henry Lawrence, held out like islands in the raging flood and kept the flag flying through the months till rescue became possible. The courageous little garrison of Cawnpore was lost through its aged general, once a fine officer, whose incapacity resulted in the hideous massacre of the entire assemblage, including a large number of English women and children, at the orders of the bloodthirsty Nana Sahib.

At Lucknow, on the other hand, was seen what could be achieved by a few resolute Englishmen. Sir Henry Lawrence was perhaps the only officer of eminence who was not living in a fool's paradise. He had caused the Residency to be stored with food and munitions and had begun to fortify it. Into it he withdrew all the white people of the place with 700 devoted native soldiers who refused to desert him. When Lawrence fell, his worthy successor, Inglis, steadfastly held out in the improvised fortress against the entire hostile city and the very numerous army of Oude.

Lord Canning, at Calcutta, had hardly any troops with which to succour the Ganges cities, but Madras and Bombay, which had preserved a better military tradition and discipline, despatched their small armies to the rescue. The heroic Havelock, with the Berserk Neill under him, moved swiftly through the terrific summer heat from Calcutta up the Ganges. They recovered Benares, Allahabad and Cawnpore, where Neill exacted a stern vengeance for the cruelties perpetrated.

Havelock had then but a handful of men left and could not hope to subdue Lucknow. But he forced his way onward so as at least to relieve the garrison. Sir James Outram had been sent from home to supersede him, but on reaching the fighting force he refused to inflict on so grand an officer such an indignity, but publicly placed himself as a volunteer under Havelock's command until he should have completed his campaign. So Lucknow was relieved, and the Residency still held until at last Lord Canning obtained the urgently needed reinforcements. He sent to Singapore, where he

knew ships were expected carrying an expedition to China under Lord Elgin. Elgin recognised the greater need of India and took his force thither, while from the Cape the Governor, Sir George Grey, on learning the tidings from Calcutta, immediately sent all the help he could, some artillery, stores and a large sum of money. These succours enabled the Mutiny to be held in check until troops from home arrived under Sir Colin Campbell (Lord Clyde). They were a long time in arriving owing to the obstinacy of an old-fashioned minister who refused to allow them to travel in steamships, though the Queen personally urged it.

The great question was, whether the outbreak was purely a soldiers' mutiny, or was a general revolution against English rule altogether. The part played by the native States would decide this. Therefore the struggle for Delhi was watched intently by English and Indians alike.

Delhi had once been to India almost what Rome had been to Europe, and a shadowy prestige remained to it. This, however, was not all which made it valuable as a centre for the revolted Sepoys. They calculated on the arsenal to provide them with guns which would enable them to destroy Agra and Lucknow and all the English before succour could arrive from Great Britain.

Lieutenant Willoughby and his eight gallant Englishmen determined to blow up the arsenal, since it was impossible to hold it. Willoughby and Sergeant Scully waited till the last moment, and so destroyed many hundreds of mutineers with the exploding building. Just outside the city the new telegraph was being operated by a lad of eighteen, Brendish, who would not fly till he had flashed word to Lahore of the reason for his departure, the message which, above all else, 'saved India.'

At Lahore, capital of the Punjab, or at the more distant frontier fortress of Peshawur, were stationed the men of immortal memory, whom Dalhousie had sent to rule those wild territories—Sir John Lawrence, John Nicholson, Robert Montgomery, Herbert Edwardes, Neville Chamberlain, and some English troops under Generals Corbett and Cotton.

Lawrence was the chief, and instantly decided that the recapture of Delhi was of greater importance than even holding the Punjab. Mobilising the whole of the reliable troops, he despatched them eastwards, leaving the Political Officers to hold Peshawur, Lahore and the other posts single-handed so long as they could. The Sikhs counted as Englishmen in this war and marched with them to the Ridge by Delhi. The ordinary Sepoy regiments in the Punjab were skilfully disarmed and disbanded. But besides the troops Lawrence sent the most remarkable man in all India, John Nicholson.

When Nicholson reached the camp on the Ridge, every soldier knew that Delhi would now be attacked and taken. He took charge, in reality, of the whole advance, by his grand moral force

galvanising the feeble Wilson into issuing orders, and he was heroically seconded. Lieutenants Salkeld and Home with six gallant comrades sacrificed themselves to blow up the Cashmere Gate, and through it and at other selected points the immense city was actually stormed by the little force of English and Sikh soldiers. Nicholson fell, leading the forlorn hope, but he lived to know that the city was taken.

The aged Sultan was merely deported, his guilty sons were followed on their flight and shot by Hodson. When the British flag again waved over Delhi it was felt all over India that the die was cast, although the actual recovery of the Ganges valley took a considerable time longer.

The Bombay army, under Rose, had had to fight its way, because certain of the central States had joined the revolt, and although the most important of the Mahratta sovereigns, Sindia, kept faithful to his alliance with the Company, his troops turned against him and he rode into the English camp with only a personal following. The south and the Madras Presidency remained quiet, chiefly because the powerful Nizam of Hyderabad also kept faith and refused to hearken to predictions of English defeat. In the north, the native government of Nepaul did the like, the Gurkhas valiantly aiding in the complete suppression of the Mutiny.

This was finally accomplished by Sir Colin Campbell, though with all his troops, and with all the Sikh and Gurkha regiments, his army was enormously outnumbered. Campbell's extraordinary care for details, and his skill in misleading the enemy, enabled his troops to carry city after city and at last to rescue the heroic survivors in Lucknow and convey them to Calcutta (November 1857).

After this the resettlement of Northern India was completed by Lord Canning with the greatest skill (1858-9). He made it his aim to punish all who were known as plotters and murderers, while extending mercy to the masses, even in Cawnpore and Lucknow, so readily as to enrage many men in both India and England, who were abusing him as "Clemency Canning" at the very moment when Lord Ellenborough had induced the Cabinet to censure him as too vindictive.

There was now no doubt left in the political world that the obsolete system of governing India through the East India Company must end. An act "for the better government of India" (1858) placed the country under the Crown, and the Company ceased to exist as anything more than a commercial association. A Secretary of State for India and a Council of India now replaced the old Board of Control and Canning's title became *Viceroy*. On 1st November, 1858, the Queen's Manifesto was publicly read in the most important Indian cities, and the personal authority of the sovereign was recognised thenceforward.

From that era internal peace has been the habitual lot of India, while its natural disasters, famine and plague, have been com-

bated with extraordinary skill and energy. The system of royal rule was completed by the Queen's assumption of the title of Empress of India (by Act of Parliament 1876) proclaimed at Delhi, 1st January, 1877.

The heir to the throne, Edward VII, visited India while Prince of Wales, and so did our present King. Indian sovereigns and Indian representatives and soldiers have visited England and taken part in supreme ceremonies, in the Jubilees of Queen Victoria and the coronations of Edward VII and George V. In the War of 1914-18 the Indian army played its full part.

VII

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (1860-71)

FROM 1859 till 1871 considerable anxiety was excited in England by the wars of other nations :—

- (a) the Franco-Italian war with Austria ;
- (b) the American Civil War ;
- (c) the successive German wars on Denmark, Austria and France.

(a) The effort of Piedmont and other Italian States towards freedom and union commanded deep sympathy in this country, but no more, while the puzzling steps taken by Napoleon III to their assistance excited considerable alarm. Palmerston supposed that the French Emperor was about to threaten England, and popular enthusiasm generated the *Volunteer* movement (1859), young men training vigorously in the use of fire-arms that they might be ready to defend the country against an invader.¹

The Queen, however, exerted all her influence to avoid irritation to France and to 'localise' the war, *i.e.* keep it from spreading beyond Italy. There was not, in fact, the least reason why this country should be involved.

Of the other two political convulsions, that in America affected us most closely, the effects of the German wars not being evident till long after.

(b) The influence of American business and finance upon our own had already been experienced when, in 1857, a banking crisis in the U.S.A. spread ruin among English firms, and also when it was perceived that American sugar could be sold here at prices which beat our own West India crop nearly out of the market, because the former was raised by slave, and the West Indian by paid, labour. But the effect of American ideas on England had been even more influential until the Civil War in the States for a time lessened it. That effect had been felt most among the large part of our population which derived its thoughts and opinions from conversation and superficial impressions rather than from books or the teaching of the well-informed. They had accepted the American assumption that there was something in the name of 'republic' which produced liberty and equality amongst men and that happiness must be more evenly distributed there. This feeling

¹ Cf. Tennyson, "Riflemen form."

tended to make royalty and aristocracy unpopular and was visibly expressed in the much larger number of emigrants who went to the United States than to Canada or Australia. It stimulated the claim of the poorer and less educated classes to a share in political power, and it made fashionable a profession of contempt towards anything ancient or traditionary, much as in the eighteenth century.

This homage to democratic and prosperous America received a sudden check from the war between North and South.

The causes of the largest Civil War known to history can only be summarised here so far as to indicate its great interest for Englishmen. The northern and the southern States of the American Republic had always presented different characteristics. In 1860 the most striking one, to English eyes, was that in the semi-tropical Southern States slavery still flourished, negro slaves cultivating the crops of sugar, tobacco and, above all, cotton, which found so ready a market in England. In the colder Northern States slaves no longer formed a recognised class. There the white population, wealthy through manufactures, were more vehement and democratic in temper than in the South and were habitually anti-English in sentiment. The most important point was that their larger numbers gave the Northerners a permanent majority in Congress and the Southerners found themselves habitually outvoted, and complained that they were heavily taxed by customs duties which only benefited the North, and that their liberty was shackled by the Northern States. The Northerners, while denying Southern complaints, also steadily discouraged slavery, particularly by providing that the recently colonised western districts should be non-slave-holding, and by assisting to transfer runaway slaves from the Southern States to Canada, where English law made them free. They began to agitate for complete abolition of slavery. The Southerners resisted this, partly from fear of the social results of freeing all at once such enormous numbers of negroes, and partly because such a step meant their own commercial ruin. Finally, eleven Southern States declared that the Northern majority was disregarding the sovereign constitutional rights of single States, and that they would secede from the Union. They entitled themselves '*Confederates*.'

The Northern States asserted the permanence of the Union and denied that any State had a right to secede. In the inevitable Civil War the North fought for national unity, the South for their own liberty of self-government, and the greater strength of the North ensured the Southern States being the battle-ground and suffering the devastations of war.

The question of slavery was probably by no means the sole reason of the Civil War, but as the war went on this question was kept in the forefront by the Northerners, who appealed for English sympathy on account of the well-known anti-slavery sentiment of this nation.

The popular book which more than any other kindled general enthusiasm—*Uncle Tom's Cabin*—is not yet forgotten.

This Civil War placed the Government of Great Britain in a grave dilemma : were the confederates to be recognised as ' belligerents,' fighting (like Greeks and Italians) to found a national state of their own? Or were they to be held as ' rebels ' and (like the Hungarians) officially ignored? The question for this Government was one of prudence. In the case of Greece and of the South American republics, Canning, by recognising them as belligerents, had virtually recognised their existence as independent States and ensured their success. And it was probable that Europe would also in this instance follow the lead of England. If she treated the South as a belligerent, the Confederate States would be recognised as a political entity and would be able to make treaties which might give them great assistance. If, however, England treated them as rebels, that would be of immense benefit to the North. Either way, England would be deluged with American abuse for presuming to settle the question. Palmerston, as Prime Minister, decided for strict neutrality, but he was now an old man and could not restrain newspapers and private speakers, nor even his Chancellor of Exchequer, Gladstone, who made some zealous public speeches on behalf of the South. Disraeli, the Conservative leader, on the other hand, predicted that the superior resources of the North must certainly conquer.

English sympathy was divided. The Southern gentry, with their old-fashioned habits and cultured dignity, still in many ways resembled the ' Old Country ' whence their ancestors had emigrated, and their stand against what they felt to be the tyranny of a permanent majority commanded the sympathy always naturally felt in this country for courage fighting against odds for liberty.

On the other hand, the belief that the North was fighting in order to free the misused negroes stirred all the enthusiasm of the ' anti-slavery ' crusade which had only just receded into our own past, and the noble character of the President of the United States, Lincoln, could not but command admiration.

The war itself produced a peculiar hardship in Lancashire, known as " the cotton famine," for the supply of cotton was interrupted and the mills as they came to the end of their stocks, one after another, stood idle, leaving many thousands of operatives without employment, nor did it take long before the rich millowners and Liverpool brokers found themselves ruined; and yet there was no part of England more strongly on the side of the Northern States than starving Lancashire, for the workmen were firm against slavery.

The attitude of the majority in the United States towards Great Britain had never yet been very friendly. When boundaries had to be traced between the almost intermingling populations beside the Atlantic or the Pacific, it was due to the good sense of individual

policemen and geographers that violence was avoided. In one case the U.S.A. representative began by notifying that if the award were against his country's claims she would refuse to be bound by it. When naval patrols were sent out to West Africa by both countries to check the slave trade carried on by raiders and smugglers, it was due to the honourable conduct of the naval officers of both sides that a breach did not result from the provocative orders transmitted from Washington. How certain Americans were allowed to act in fomenting a Canadian civil disturbance will shortly be told, and it was only due to the forbearance of the British Ministry and the tact of the American President that a national quarrel was avoided.

There was a kind of tacit agreement amongst European statesmen to make allowances for the difficulties of American ministers, hampered by a Constitution so incomprehensible, and a population so changeable and sentimental. But European Governments could not disregard the feelings of their own populations, and there was constant danger that the insults so wantonly voiced by Americans might rouse the resentment of Englishmen past control.

Such an incident occurred in 1861. The Confederate States despatched a pair of envoys to visit Europe (as their ancestors had done in 1776). These envoys, Mason and Slidell, made their way to a British West India island and there embarked as ordinary passengers on an English mail steamer, the *Trent*. But they had been watched, and a U.S. warship stopped the *Trent* and forcibly removed the two gentlemen as prisoners. This was too much: the Cabinet promptly sent a demand for the restoration of the passengers and an apology for stopping the *Trent*. Mason and Slidell were released, but the angry Congress refused to permit any apology. Law of nations, rights of neutrals, free ships under a free flag, all the cries and principles lately so famous were forgotten, and a vote of thanks was officially accorded to the American captain who had insulted the British flag. The Queen and Prince Albert found a way out. Would the American Government say that the captain had acted without orders? It would: let that be accepted by England as a sufficient apology. Such 'tame' conduct was most unpalatable to our national pride and it probably encouraged the U.S. in its overbearing treatment of us in the *Alabama* question, a question as to which we were certainly in the wrong, though not to the extravagant degree asserted by Americans.

The Southern Confederates, their ports being blockaded by the U.S. (Northern) navy, had bespoken a vessel to be built for them in Liverpool, as if for a private firm, the *Alabama*. The shipbuilders guessed that she was really intended for warlike operations: to allow such a ship to be built in one of our ports would be an 'unfriendly act' against the U.S., and they duly sent to the minister to whose department such affairs belonged, Lord John Russell, information enough to let him understand the truth. But,

whether from sympathy with the Confederates or more probably from sheer dilatoriness, he sent no orders. He was reminded, but said he must consult the law officers of the Crown, and one of them was ill. In vain the American Ambassador remonstrated, till at last Russell was warned that the *Alabama* was going out of the Mersey on a 'trial trip' and brought himself to order that she should be kept in Liverpool. But she had gone and did not come back, and very soon news arrived of her as a Confederate privateer severely damaging North American shipping.

The greatest indignation was now expressed in the Northern States, and as soon as their victory over the South was achieved (in 1865) the American Government began to press Great Britain for compensation. Two short-lived Cabinets, those of Russell and Derby, entered upon negotiations, but the Americans rejected each offered settlement, enormously raising their terms, till Gladstone succeeded in persuading President Grant to consent to arbitration. Even then the American Congress insisted on adding to their claim a list of contingent expenses which Grant and Gladstone had agreed were inadmissible, and it was with difficulty that the Prime Minister, though supported by the Leader of the Opposition, could persuade Parliament to overlook this breach of the agreement.

Five international commissioners were carefully selected (English, American, Italian, Swiss and Brazilian) and met at Geneva, and after hearing claims, replies and arguments (presented by each side through counsel as if in a lawsuit), awarded $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions of pounds to be paid to the United States, a costly fine for Russell's procrastination, and more than double, it is said, of the damage done,¹ though far less than the $9\frac{1}{2}$ millions to which the Americans had contrived to add up their bill.

"The Geneva award," as the arbitration is called, was the first important instance in modern times of arbitration between nations, and attracted universal attention. Arbitration had been tried before by Great Britain and the United States on two boundary questions, but the U.S.A. had refused to abide by the award given as to one of them.

In all these cases the decisions were considered by the English to be somewhat unfair to this country, but there was no attempt to disobey the award and the country silently paid the enormous indemnity.

(c) The German, or rather Prussian, wars of 1865 to 1871 transformed Germany by making Prussia the controlling State over the others, and thus altered the accustomed political balance of Europe. Austria became much weaker, and the union of Germany displayed a very large and powerful State in place of a collection of small weak ones.

¹ Complete account in *Cambridge History of Foreign Policy*, and description from inside knowledge in Selborne's *Memorials*, Part II, Vol. I.

Unity was one of the most powerful ideals of the nineteenth century; Great Britain had led the way by her Union with Ireland; Italians were fighting Austria, and Greeks were fighting Turkey for freedom to unite their respective States. Four years had been consumed in civil war to maintain the integrity of the United States. During all this period the Germans were conducting a strong propaganda with the same ideal.

The strongest bond of national union has always been found in the joint effort of courage and sacrifice in a patriotic war, as the Anglo-Saxons had learned under Alfred a thousand years before and Frenchmen had learned throughout many fighting centuries. Of this truth the Prussian minister, Bismarck, was well aware, and he sought opportunities of arraying the different German States in arms for some common aim in which success should be ensured to them all by the troops and generals of Prussia, which thus would demonstrate her superior importance.

Bismarck got his first opportunity over the famous Schleswig-Holstein question—to wit, whether Denmark was to keep those two duchies or see them detached from her Crown and added to Germany.

When someone, in later days, asked Lord Palmerston about this famous question, he replied that only three persons ever had understood it, of whom one was dead, one was mad, and the other had forgotten (the Prince Consort, the former Danish Prime Minister, and himself).

The 'question' was a puzzle composed of genealogies and treaties, extending over some four centuries. The general position in the 'sixties was that Holstein was wholly German, Schleswig mostly Danish, that Holstein and Schleswig were as closely united as England and Wales, and the Danish royal house had inherited them, as the Stuarts did England. But here the analogy stops, for when the childless king should die, the host of heirs claiming the different parts were as numerous as those who once competed for Scotland, but without an Edward I to arbitrate for them.

The question did not appear to concern Great Britain unless on the principle which Pitt, Canning, Palmerston and Disraeli alike always asserted, viz. that though this country is neutral on questions which purely concern other nations, yet in any political reconstruction which will alter the relations of Powers to each other she expects to have some voice. If Turkey might not obliterate Greece, nor Russia, Turkey, was Germany to be allowed to partition Denmark?

Palmerston's Ministry, contrary to expectations abroad, had hitherto kept England out of war. It was a very strong Ministry because it combined the advantages both of a 'one-man' and a 'coalition' Cabinet: among the electors the popularity of 'Pam' always commanded a majority; inside Parliament he was supported by the Whig Russell and the Liberal Gladstone. Palmerston him-

self in views and temper agreed best with the Conservatives and was frequently supported by that party against his own more advanced followers, the Liberals, who, therefore, could not drag their chief in their own direction. For instance, on the legal and ecclesiastical question whether a law for divorce should be passed, Palmerston advised it and carried it though Gladstone resisted. As to the American Civil War, when Gladstone and Russell would have 'recognised' the Southern Confederates, Palmerston maintained neutrality, pleasing the Queen and the Conservatives much more than his own Liberal followers. On this Danish-German question Russell, as Foreign Minister, had already given Denmark good reason to expect that Great Britain would not leave the German states to overwhelm her. It was obvious that against a general German attack Denmark would have no chance, though it was the Germans who everywhere declaimed and sang on the tyranny of Denmark to Holstein and the heroism of themselves in authorising Prussia to conquer it. Austria joined Prussia in this war of giant and dwarf, thinking to share the spoils and to keep Prussia from posing as the champion of Germany. Queen Victoria helped to restrain Russell from turning his large words into deeds, for she had adopted the late Prince Consort's admiration of Prussia, so that no English fleet occupied the key position in the battle of Kiel as the Danes had hoped. It was hardly likely that Parliament would sanction any warlike demonstration, for events in Germany and Denmark were then universally considered to be of no interest to us.

Bismarck was well able to oust Austria next year from her share of Schleswig-Holstein, and to advertise Prussia as the champion of United Germanism. He cherished a spite against Victoria for having married the Prince of Wales to a Danish Princess, and at home he talked as if she had been an open foe: so he began the long education of Germany in the principle of Anglophobia. In the following year, 1866, Bismarck picked a quarrel with Austria, and in the astonishing 'Seven Weeks' War' defeated her at Sadowa, and ousted her entirely from the circles of Germany.

Both England and France were puzzled and perturbed by this reversal of parts between the two chief Powers of Central Europe. The French Emperor, who had been courting Austrian friendship, was alarmed to find that Prussia, after all, was the military superior, and he began tortuous negotiations in the hope of obtaining some kind of advantage which should make him popular with the French people: for the French leader of the opposition to the Emperor had boldly declared: "It is France that has been defeated at Sadowa."

The result of Napoleon's schemes, however, was only that, while he offended both Austria and Great Britain, he was utterly deceived by the superior duplicity of Bismarck, who finally forced him into the catastrophe of the Franco-German War of 1870-71.

This war broke rifts in the flattering mirage which to the eyes of the Queen and the English public had hitherto enfolded Prussia. Bismarck's subtlety was that of the consummate type which disguised itself (like Iago's) behind the mask of its own coarser qualities. The English (like Othello) had taken for granted that so blunt and rude a man must, of course, be 'honest,' and in making allowances for the simple brutality of a child of nature they were blind to the craft of his machinations and the vast ambition behind them.

On the other hand, antipathy to France was still inveterate with us; the Crimean War had not permanently mollified popular old prejudices. Palmerston was known to suspect the French Emperor of some design against us, and it was a suspicion easily stirred in the public.

"God bless the narrow sea that keeps her off!"

cried the poet laureate. The Queen's apprehensions were removed by making personal acquaintance with Napoleon III and his Empress, Eugénie, but Englishmen laughed at her for being, as they thought, so easily taken in.

When, then, the war of 1870 opened, English sympathy was with the Germans. Not till long after was it revealed how, in order to bring it about, Bismarck had, first, tempted Napoleon with the offer of Belgium, then confided the proposal to European Ministries as a French one, and finally published a partly forged telegram in order to exasperate the French and German public and his own Prussian sovereign into a warlike temper.

When, in 1871, revelations of the harshness of the victorious Germans began to reach England they were by many disbelieved, and in any case it was too late for mediation even had the Ministry or Germany been willing for such an effort.

The one problem involved in the war which seriously concerned Great Britain had been ably settled by Granville, Gladstone's Foreign Secretary. Neither belligerent must enter Belgium or Luxembourg. Two treaties were drawn up and signed to the effect that, should either France or Prussia violate the neutrality of Belgium Great Britain would at once join the other belligerent to expel her; and Belgium was therefore left undisturbed.

The military weakness of France, known already to Bismarck, was displayed to the world as soon as the armies began to mobilise. The Emperor Napoleon III was very ill, and he had placed at the head of affairs incompetent men. Within six months the efficient Prussian armies and generals had beaten the French overwhelmingly, taken the fortresses which protected Paris, shut up one French army inside Metz and encircled the other at Sedan, and compelled both to ignominious surrender. Modern Europe had never witnessed so astounding a collapse. Napoleon III and the

French armies were sent to captivity in Germany and the Germans besieged Paris.

The terrifying spectacle of Prussian strength and remorselessness was heightened by the explosion of anarchy in Paris known as *the Commune* (March to May 1872) when the massed mob seized what military weapons remained, pillaged the banks and wealthy houses and enacted an orgy of blood and fire. A *Commune*—or revolutionary government—was set up in Paris. It proclaimed the abolition of religion, family, marriage, private property and central government. Paris was half destroyed before the remainder of the troops under Marshal MacMahon and President Thiers at length overcame the Communists and established the Third Republic. The terms which the Prussians imposed upon defeated France were none the lighter for this outburst. Alsace and French Lorraine were annexed by Germany, and a heavy tribute in money was exacted, calculated to crush France under debt and taxes. The Germans then celebrated at Versailles the inauguration of their own *Union* as the *German Empire*, the triumphant Prussian King being hailed as Emperor by the other German sovereigns. Thus was the ambitious work of Frederick II completed by Bismarck.

VIII

DISRAELI AND THE EASTERN QUESTION

(i) DISRAELI

THE creator of the modern Conservative party contrasts strongly with most of the typical statesmen of his time, and not least in that his political achievement was better understood after, than during, his own lifetime. His policy was based upon large permanent principles, and he ranked himself as a Conservative from intellectual conviction, not from habit or accident.

He maintained that the firmest foundations of the English Constitution and civilisation lay in the age-long political habits of the nation, in the permanence of the monarchy and the hereditary principle, the linking of responsibility with "a stake in the country," and the consequent administration of local and central government by those who, as landowners, belonged permanently to a locality. "You have never changed your land tenure," he used to say, and he held that the constitutional revolution of 1832 in no way altered the natural leadership of "The Gentlemen of England" in politics, because their lifelong training habituated them to responsibility and integrity.

Secondly, he held that in a House of Commons elected by popular suffrage an organised *party* was the sole possible instrument of government. In consequence he refused to approve Peel's sudden reversal of commercial policy, and he considered Peel's disruption of the Conservative party a worse fault than his sacrifice of the agricultural interest. Party, in a numerous assembly, had become the necessary method of rule, because simply personal or family connections must wither away before a popular franchise. Only the acceptance of clear principles could knit a large connection of members into a *party* firm enough to secure integrity in conduct and consistency in policy. Without *party*, individuals would vote according to their own views or interests, and the decisions of Parliament be determined by the accident of those who happened to be present. This would lead to continual changes and to rash experiments impossible to rescind. There would be no confidence, whether in Great Britain, the Colonies or foreign nations.

A leader, then, must not feel at liberty to change the avowed principles of his party for the sake of a temporary political advantage, because this would ruin the standard of political honesty and

wreck the accepted modes of parliamentary government. On the other hand, the inevitable changes of time and circumstance, among ourselves or others, alter the needs of new generations, and for such changes Government must provide. Not the rigid forms of a fossilised past, but the fresh and natural developments of a continuous life, ought to clothe the modern political party.

It followed that Disraeli had less dread of *democracy* than many statesmen either of his own or the opposite party, if 'democracy' meant the English people as a whole.

Disraeli looked to *local interests* to counteract the common democratic danger of a tyranny of simple arithmetic, meaning by 'interests' the characteristics and business of the various types which together composed the nation. Though a larger number of cotton operatives lived in Lancashire than of agricultural labourers in Dorset, it did not follow that Dorset ought to accept Lancashire ideas.

It was for this reason that, when new franchise Bills were laid before the Commons, the Conservatives always demanded before voting to know the redistribution of seats. It was not a matter of course, in their view, that a very large city should obtain more members at the expense of some smaller agricultural or fishing town. They, in fact, discouraged the American and Radical interpretation of *democracy* as purely a numerical majority, entitled to dictate on all points to smaller sections of population. "The rights of minorities" was the phrase which emerged rather later to express this idea.

Disraeli's choice of party and policy was the more striking because, owing to his personal circumstances, the process of attaining eminence must be lengthy, and, indeed, it took most of his lifetime.

By descent (though not in creed) he was a Jew, the son of a well-known but by no means wealthy literary man; and he felt at least as profound a pride in his long ancestry and famous nationality as any fashionable Whigs or Tories who, with their traditions of some two or three centuries, looked down upon Jews with all the scorn, though not the dread, of the Middle Ages. There was, therefore, for him no nomination seat (such as Peel and Gladstone obtained), and he had first to conquer his way into Parliament. He seems to be the first to whom has been attributed the jest: "What then do you stand on?"—"My head!" At any rate it illustrates the self-confidence of the young man who set out to carve a path by brain-power into the close connection of an aristocracy of wealth or rank with which his family had not intermarried nor he himself been at school.

In consequence everyone called him an 'adventurer' and professed 'suspicion' of him. Suspicion has been the traditional attitude of orthodox politicians towards anyone with original ideas:—Chatham, Shelburne, Canning, Disraeli or Chamberlain.

It was perhaps unlucky for Disraeli that his education in London and his father's library had taught him to found his ideas on history and a knowledge of world-wide conditions, for his apposite allusions to famous events of the past or the present were probably more puzzling to the House of the 'fifties and 'sixties than the conventional Latin tags out of well-known school-books.

The first door of promotion which opened to him under Peel was promptly closed (as appears) by Lord Stanley's haughty threat that he himself would refuse office if "that scoundrel" were to be included in the Ministry. Peel thereupon 'dropped' the young lieutenant whom he had recently been encouraging, and in turn received from him a letter which formed a kind of warning that the tie was severed.

Peel's parliamentary defeat in 1846 after the repeal of the Corn Laws was largely due to Disraeli, and the new Conservative party was mainly created by his assiduous work, though, ironically enough, its acknowledged head was Stanley himself, now in the Upper House as 14th Earl of Derby. Disraeli became Leader of the Opposition in the Commons, and it was he who coined the famous phrase 'Her Majesty's Opposition' that has sometimes been called the most significant expression of our constitutional parliamentary theory. When Derby held his three brief premierships, Disraeli was his right hand, and on Derby's retirement (from illness) Disraeli became Prime Minister (1868 and 1874-80).

Throughout his effective career as a minister of the Crown, Disraeli himself directed the policy of his Cabinet in both the Home and the Foreign spheres, though he left the steps and details to the ministers of the departments concerned.

In the sphere of Home government, aided by Cross and Northcote, he carried the rapid series of reforms which made a Radical member tell his constituency: "The Conservative party have done more for the working classes in five years than the Liberals have in fifty." Besides the series of practical Acts on factories and public Health already described (Chap. I, ii.), there was a series of Education Acts (1876 to 1879) and of measures for at last increasing the number of bishops (1875 to 1878). The new sees of St. Albans, Truro, Liverpool, Newcastle, Wakefield and Southwell enabled the Church to take active steps to repair the apathy of the past 150 years. The sees of Ripon and Manchester had, however, been erected earlier, in 1836 and 1847 respectively.

His particular attention was devoted to the international relations of the country, the more so because his Foreign Secretary in 1874-8, the 15th Earl of Derby, was apt to confuse neutrality with inertia.

The Conservative principles of foreign policy had already been exemplified on a small scale by the Derby Ministry of 1867-8 with regard to Abyssinia. The Abyssinian expedition was absurdly sneered at as a "not very glorious though well-managed campaign."

In other words, it succeeded without being obliged to fight pitched battles. Asia and Africa learned that English subjects would be effectively protected by their Government, that barbarians need not hope that outrages would be condoned because chiefs or tribes were 'petty,' and that British military and naval resources were in perfect order and handled by admirable commanders.

But far more important than the brilliant little success in Abyssinia were the complicated European rivalries and fears which are usually classed together as *the Eastern Question*.

One reason for anxiety was that any explosion in the Balkan peninsula was likely to entail a European war far more horrible than the recent German wars. Another, that the Russian Bear which stretched one paw towards the Bosphorus was stretching the other with heavy menace towards India, that cynosure of English eyes.

The outline of events in India has already been given (Chap. V). So tremendous was the responsibility and so precarious was life in Calcutta, that it was with extreme difficulty that a Viceroy could be found; nobleman after nobleman was suggested in vain before Lord Lytton accepted the terrifying dignity.

In 1875-6 Disraeli drew the tie between Great Britain and India closer in a very practical way. The wonderful Suez Canal, designed by M. de Lesseps (France has always been the pioneer of the grandiose canals), had been financed upon the commercial plan of shares divided among shareholders. It occurred that the largest owner, the Khedive of Egypt, decided to sell his shares. It was not easy to find a purchaser able to pay the enormous sum of four millions, and in truth the affair became a competition between Disraeli and the French Government, which could not persuade its reluctant financiers to advance the money. Disraeli could, and so the British Government became mistress of the Ship Canal which was already her gate to India. It was impossible to have a parliamentary debate without stirring all manner of difficulties. But the Prime Minister could only give the necessary instructions if he obtained Cabinet approval. The story told was that, as it might be disastrous if the news leaked out, he placed his confidential secretary outside the room, and on getting the required consent put out his head and said "Yes."

Off went Mr. Corry to Baron de Rothschild to ask for four millions—for the Prime Minister—to-morrow.

"What is your security?" calmly inquired the financier.

"The British Government."

"You shall have it."

As Disraeli described his stroke in a melodramatic letter to a friend—"We have had all the gamblers, capitalists, financiers of the world, organised and platooned in bands of plunderers, arrayed against us, and secret emissaries in every corner, and have baffled them all, and have never been suspected . . . had [Lesseps]

succeeded, the whole of the Suez Canal would have belonged to France and they might have shut it up ! ” ¹

(ii) THE EASTERN QUESTION AND BERLIN CONGRESS

The Eastern Question, like the Irish or Hungarian Questions, or the American Civil War, presented more than one aspect. In the first and simplest view Turkey-in-Europe (the entire Balkan peninsula) consisted of Christian peoples of European type ruled harshly by a Mohammedan race of Asiatic type. In the second view, Turkey-in-Europe was a portion of an empire which embraced Turkey-in-Asia, and its Sultan was recognised as the religious Head, or *Caliph*, of the Mohammedan peoples of Asia and Africa, besides possessing claims to suzerainty over large Asiatic regions, which had once been very real and possibly might become so again. Of those Mohammedan peoples the Queen of Great Britain ruled many millions in India.

In the first view, it might be forgotten by the English, but was well remembered by Russians, that the Christian peoples were of different races—Greek, Bulgarian, Serbian, Wallachian (or Rumanian)—and hated each other at least as fiercely as they did the Turks. In the second view, it was to be remembered that the geographical position of Constantinople gave to it the control of the two all-important straits (the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles) which were the gates of commerce for half Russia and a considerable part of Asia.

Owing to the maritime ineptitude of the Turks in modern times, the Eastern Mediterranean had long been practically free to trade, but had to be policed, as to pirates, by the English or the French. But a few centuries earlier things had been very different, and easily might be so again if a naval Power were to occupy Constantinople. Of this had Napoleon dreamed in vain. This Pitt had foreseen and endeavoured to guard against by fending off a Russian annexation. He it was who had bequeathed to English statesmen the policy, not understood by the mass of the people though intelligible enough to merchants, of helping the Sultan to keep the double straits, and to keep them open to commerce but closed to war. Since his time financiers, especially in France and England, had obtained a further interest at Constantinople by the loans they made to the Porte, which had readily set up a public Debt in imitation of the advanced West.

The only maritime and military Power which coveted the dubious throne of Constantinople was still Russia, whose Tsar had now assumed the rôle of patron of the Christian subjects of the Sultan, an attitude well calculated to conciliate all those, and they were numerous, who saw the Eastern Question only in its first and simplest aspect. The whole of the Russian peoples, however

¹ Buckle's *Life*, V. 446-9.

ignorant and barbarous, could be stirred by the simple crusading principle of fighting Turks in the name of Christianity, while more intelligent Russians could snuff from afar, not plunder merely, but the control of Europe's commerce. There were in Western Europe multitudes who looked no further than the word 'Christian,' and upon these Russia counted to hamper her most likely opponent, the British Government.

In the 'seventies the autocracy of the Sultan was really wielded by a clique of ministers; Austria was watching for a chance of seizing as much as possible without fighting Russia; Russia hoped to be borne into Constantinople on a tide of Christian insurrections before any other Power could interfere; Prussia would joyfully see both Austria and Russia well entangled in the Balkans. Neither France nor Great Britain intended the Balkan peninsula to slide into the arms of either Power, but both wanted to get dividends on the Turkish debt paid to their financiers, and to avoid a European war. Already a menace from the new German Empire had been levelled at France, in 1875, which had cost Great Britain the utmost pains to avert.

In 1875 most of the Balkan provinces were in revolt against Turkish tyranny. The Porte turned against the nearest, Bulgaria, its usual weapon of massacre, and the cruelties of the Turks were then for the first time described to the reading public of Western Europe by the correspondent of an enterprising newspaper.

While cries of horror resounded in London, the Austrian Government prepared to assume the rôle of protector of the Christians by addressing a remonstrance to the Porte, which Count Andrassy suggested would carry more weight if other Powers joined in it.

The *Joint Note*, in which Great Britain shared, urged the Sultan to make practical reforms and grant religious liberty (January 1876).

To this insult the Porte deftly replied by stopping the payment of dividends; Mohammedan fanatics replied by a riot at Salonika and the murder of the French and German Consuls; while a rival political clique, calling itself a 'party of reform,' wiped out the insult in the traditional way by deposing the Sultan, and eventually setting up Abdul Hamid II.

In the meantime the English Mediterranean fleet had anchored in Besika Bay, just outside the Dardanelles (May 1876), and French and German squadrons hurried up to show themselves in support. But the British Government still insisted that peace must not be broken, and the Russians reckoned on this to give them time enough to bully the Porte into submission.

The usual game of bluff and delay ensued. For six weeks the Porte played Great Britain and Russia against each other, but Russia in the meantime was mobilising. In the spring of 1877 Russian armies compelled Rumania, which had just proclaimed her independence of Turkey, to allow them a passage through her

territory, and reached the Balkan mountains, but there were checked by the brilliant Turkish defence of Plevna. By the time this resistance was overcome winter and disease had set in, and soon it looked as if the wrecks of the two miserable armies were racing each other for graves at the Chatalja lines, only thirty miles from Constantinople.

The aim of the Russians was to get into Constantinople without opposition from the Powers. Their Ambassadors, there and at London, and the Tsar himself at Petersburg uttered most earnest, if slightly inconsistent, declarations of innocence, while at the same time the Russian generals were negotiating with the Turks a secret treaty called an armistice. They preserved secrecy by such simple precautions as placing the telegraph office forty miles from their tents and sending telegrams by walking messengers, and finally by cutting all the wires from Constantinople to Western Europe. Whereupon our resourceful representative, Layard,¹ sent his messages via Bombay. Unhappily his optimistic tidings of the Russo-Turkish 'armistice' turned out deceptive. It was but a polite term for the Turkish surrender to Russia, afterwards announced as the Treaty of San Stefano (1878). By it the Porte yielded to the Tsar precisely the military advantages which the Western Powers most dreaded :—A much enlarged Bulgaria was to coop the Sultan up in his capital; all the Slav provinces were to be independent of the Turks but 'protected' by the Tsar; Russia was to annex Bessarabia from unlucky Rumania, and could then dominate the Black Sea and the Straits.

Austria promptly secured her own interests by occupying with her troops Bosnia and Herzegovina. But the British fleet had already moved to the Golden Horn in the very nick of time to make the Russian troops halt outside the walls of Constantinople, and Russia and Austria began to doubt whether they could indeed rely upon Great Britain to remain neutral while they partitioned Turkey-in-Europe.

There had, in fact, arisen in England a most unwonted excitement over the Eastern situation. At first Gladstone's indignant speeches against the Turks and the horrors of the Bulgarian massacres carried his audiences away (1876); later on, public opinion began to take account of some of the other factors in the question.

The Queen's speech and the active naval and military preparations going on showed that ministers meant to intervene rather than permit Russia to seize the Straits. The Prime Minister obtained authority to call up the reserves, and Generals Napier and Wolseley were ready to start.

The emergency caused extraordinary divergences among politicians: Derby, the most popular of Disraeli's colleagues, resigned the Foreign Office rather than countenance preparation for war:

¹ Known in London as a bore of whom Lady Palmerston had long before exclaimed, she could "never forgive Nineveh for having discovered Layard."

but Salisbury filled his place and henceforth closely adhered to the Prime Minister, of whom he had formerly been one of the most 'suspicious' critics.

The Opposition was more widely divided; Hartington, pattern of the patriotic Whig, and Forster, champion of the Yorkshire Radicals and Nonconformists, were agreed on the necessity of protecting the Straits, and ceased to hinder the Cabinet; but Gladstone himself had been captured by the great literary lights of Oxford, Cambridge and London—Freeman, Fawcett and Carlyle—and with them continued to urge in popular meetings the expulsion of "the unspeakable Turk" from European shores, "with bag and baggage"; the political Nonconformist party vehemently endorsed the cry as a moral policy and threw over Forster, nobody answering Gathorne Hardy's pertinent inquiry, "How are you going to make them go?" While the Conservative Cabinet wondered if they were to be overturned by popular frenzy, Liberals murmured that Gladstone would break up their party. Neither of the great party chiefs can be absolved from the fault of clamouring for the impossible; Disraeli insisted that the Turkish empire must not be partitioned, but the Sultan be left to reform his own provinces—of which he was notoriously incapable: while Gladstone cried that the Ministry ought to have 'taken guarantees' for reforms—as if there were or could be any.

Popular passion was exhibited in every mode, from sermons to music-hall ditties, and all the papers were raging. Was the Prime Minister a great statesman or a charlatan? Was Mr. Gladstone a prophet or a traitor? London mobs broke Gladstone's windows, or cheered a pantomime chorus (which bequeathed a political nickname)—

"We don't want to fight, but, by jingo, if we do,

We've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got the money too!"

More brilliant wits wove derision of the Government into the delicious musical comedy of *Pinafore*, but the days when verse and music swayed votes had long since set (if they had ever risen), or perhaps doggerel was more persuasive than satire, for a feeling generally gained ground that the Ministry was in the right.

The public for the most part cherished an illusion not wholly dispelled from the mind of the Queen herself, that the mere fiat of England would surely suffice to quell the troubled waves of continental ambitions. Disraeli was obliged to explain to her Majesty that neutral remonstrances could not prevent a military Power from sending an army into Constantinople. But the popular press was not to be so instructed.

The announcement of the Russo-Turkish treaty of San Stefano provided a fresh starting-point for the opponents of Russia. That no Power alone could without assent of the others alter the international position had been an accepted principle from 1815 and

had, in 1871, been expressly stated in the Declaration of the Conference of London. This principle had, in truth, now replaced the old "balance of power" as the recognised international theory of Europe.

An international congress seemed, therefore, the sole method of arriving at a general agreement, and Austria, still acknowledged as the premier dignitary of the Continent, proposed that one should meet at Berlin.

The Berlin Congress of 1878 ranks among the most important of its genus. It differed essentially from those held early in the century, which were simply intimate consultations between a few powerful sovereigns.

The Congress of Berlin promised to be a competition among the responsible ministers of many countries, each trying to obtain particular advantages for his own by argument instead of war. The superficial resemblance to a debating society was negated by the fact that agreement, not argument, was the aim; yet the publicity of the proceedings entailed additional chances of quarrel, neither confidence nor secrecy being possible. It was, for instance, almost certain that any scheme agreeable to both Russia and Austria would alarm the other States, and quite uncertain whether Turkey would acquiesce in the proposals of her friend Great Britain. In short, no tentative suggestion could be publicly offered with any hope of success.

At the same time it so happened that each plenipotentiary, though officially empowered to speak and decide for the Ministry of his State, was not quite certain whether it would endorse his pledges if they proved unpopular, and therefore was obliged to reckon with the effect likely to be produced at home by the speeches and proposals reported from the Congress. Even if every envoy and every secretary and copyist were honourable and taciturn, it was certain that news or rumours would be published in newspapers, and that whatever appeared in any paper would next day be repeated all over Europe. The theory of secrecy was therefore abandoned and sufficient reports were handed to the journalists to pacify them and their public: the first general recognition of the importance of popular opinion and the power of newspapers.

The political position of Lords Beaconsfield and Salisbury at home has already been indicated.

"The only real danger," Salisbury wrote, "is that the Russians should fancy that Gladstone is master and should lose their heads in that belief." They would ignore the British representations if they thought an anti-Turkish Liberal Ministry was about to take office. The Russian envoys themselves, as well as the French, were in positions even more precarious, and found themselves sent into retirement when they returned home. The Austrian had to satisfy both his apathetic master the Emperor and the fiery Hungarian nobility. Only Bismarck could be perfectly sure of

support from his sovereign, the lately proclaimed German Emperor. Bismarck even went out of his way to flout the political proprieties by making a speech in the German *Reichstag* on the strained relations of other Powers, declaring, in language blunt to the verge of rudeness, that Germany alone desired neither profits nor annexations, his own ambition being simply to act "the honest broker" among the competing statesmen.

The ostensible purpose of the Congress was to revise the recent treaty of San Stefano. Russia in roundabout language informed the British minister that each State was at liberty to criticise whatever she chose and Russia equally at liberty to pay no attention. Thereupon Great Britain declined to enter the Congress at all unless Russia would accept the principle endorsed in 1871 by all the Powers that: "No Power can liberate itself from the terms of a treaty without the consent of the other contracting Powers." There followed some really confidential negotiations between Salisbury and the Russian Ambassador, and when at length the Russian consented to the suggestions of our Foreign Minister he drew up the celebrated 'Salisbury Circular,' which communicated to the other Powers the views of Great Britain upon the recent Russo-Turkish treaty as a whole (1st April, 1878).

This piece of diplomatic courage made clear the position and restored a sentiment of respect for Great Britain which during the régime of the irresolute Derby had been lacking. The Circular provided a sort of outline or agenda for the proceedings of the Congress.

At this point the announcement that a body of Indian troops was assembling at Malta seemed to prove that now the British ministers meant what they said. Convincing also was the general approval expressed in England.

The Congress revised the Russo-Turkish treaty in such a manner as to partition the old 'Turkey-in-Europe' into definite States, respectively dependent (in varying terminology) upon the three rival Powers:—Bosnia and Herzegovina on Austria; Serbia and Montenegro nominally on Turkey, but really on Russia; Bulgaria on Russia as to one half, on Turkey as to the other half (called Eastern Rumelia). But Rumania was forced to sacrifice fertile Bessarabia to Russia and accept instead an uninviting scrap of Bulgaria, the Dobrudja, or delta of the Danube mouths. Austria, moreover, got the sea-coast which belonged to Montenegro, and was actually requested to destroy the famous rocks of the Iron Gates on the Danube which had for ages formed the barrier between her territories and the Serbian capital: a task which she joyfully accomplished in 1896. Austria, at the cost of the new little States, had won immense gains which it was probable that Russia would resent.

On the other shore of the Black Sea Russia got the chief Turkish strong places in Caucasia, including Batoum, which the Tsar

promised should be a free port, but which his son on his accession at once fortified and closed.

Plans and promises were carefully drawn up and solemnly pledged at Berlin as to protection and reform for Macedonians, Armenians, Cretans and other defenceless peoples, of which nothing was ever performed. But just before the assembling of the Congress Great Britain and the Porte had concluded a secret treaty whereby the former undertook to defend the Sultan's *Asiatic* territories against Russia, and he in gratitude assigned to his ally (for so long as Russia retained the Caucasian fortresses) Cyprus as a "place of arms" for which she, in turn, promised an annual rent.

Correctly speaking this *Cyprus Convention* (1878) was no infringement of the powers of the Congress of Berlin, Cyprus belonging to the Levant, and Asia and Africa having been placed outside the scope of the Congress, which was to deal only with Europe and the Black Sea. But it looked a little like sharp practice and was fiercely denounced as such, not only by the annexers of Bosnia and Bessarabia but by several English politicians. But in London the Cyprus undertaking was widely approved and enthusiastic crowds applauded Beaconsfield's dramatic assurance on his return, "I bring peace with honour."

What the Berlin Congress really achieved was a respite of European war for another generation, the recognition of the Christian provinces of the Balkan peninsula as separate States, and their entrance upon their modern political careers; and although almost every State represented at Berlin subsequently 'tore up' such Articles as were especially inconvenient to it, while the Porte remained as tyrannical as before, nevertheless a decided approval and some possible scope was obtained for reform and progress. The only Power which endeavoured practically to provide for such a commencement was Great Britain. A small number of expert officers were established by Lord Salisbury as Consuls in particular districts of Asia Minor, with authority which permitted them to advise, and to report upon, the Turkish administration in those provinces. But the succeeding Liberal Ministry withdrew them, after barely four years, and the brief experiment is chiefly memorable because it brought about the first introduction to responsibility and to the East of a young officer of the Engineers, destined to become a great organiser of the British Empire—Herbert Horatio Kitchener.

IX

INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL FORCES

(A) EDUCATION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

At the close of the eighteenth century education was still, as it had been for a thousand years, a branch of Church activity. Whatever character had been impressed upon the Church—Saxon, Norman, Roman, monarchical, puritan, episcopal, latitudinarian—had been duly reflected in education.

But from the opening of the nineteenth century a different standard was introduced into the greater schools, a standard of practical efficiency which required instruction in other than purely literary and mathematical learning, while experts sometimes suggested that this instruction need not be combined with religious influence at all.

It has been shown elsewhere¹ how the regulations for licensing schoolmasters gave responsibility and authority to the bishops and preserved the ecclesiastical character of the two universities. At Oxford, students must sign the Thirty-nine Articles at the commencement of their course, at Cambridge they need not, but at the close of their course, and before receiving the degree, must declare themselves to be *bona fide* members of the Church of England. Such declarations became increasingly distasteful in proportion as reverence and tolerance spread, while the Nonconformists became more distinctly separated from the Church, and Revolution and Free-thought stimulated anti-Christian propaganda, and in consequence several proposals were made to abolish the "Tests."

But the idea of the universities as folds, or perhaps strongholds, of the Church and, at the same time, of traditional classical learning was ingrained in the minds of the eminent men who themselves had emerged thence, and was carried far into the Victorian era. The university tests appeared to be so firmly entrenched in custom that efforts to widen the gates were diverted to the provision of other colleges unhampered by old-fashioned traditions.

In 1828 the University College of London was opened, as a non-theological institution. The foundation next year of a Church college, King's College, was regarded as a piece of competition, London, it was thought, being obviously unable to provide students

¹ In Vol. III of this *History*, chap. vi (iii), p. 57 ff.

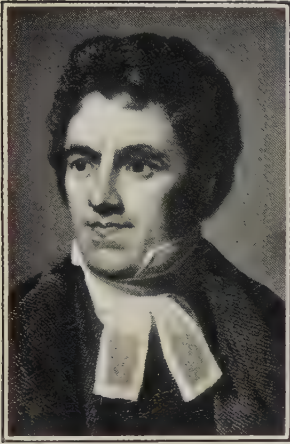
enough for two. Hereupon the Government impartially severed the *University of London* from either college by giving its title to a body for conducting examinations and conferring degrees thereafter (1836), and this arrangement continued for sixty years, because the examinational degree became very useful to the new local colleges. The two London colleges and their non-residential university agreed together in opening their courses and degrees to women (1869, 1880).

This concession of Higher Education was, however, a climax rather than a beginning. Thanks to Maurice, London had already seen a Working Men's College of a type previously undertaken in Sheffield, that is to say, by the voluntary teaching of enthusiasts who were either not paid or only nominally paid for their labours, and a few working women had also been supplied with lectures. But such colleges placed a heavy strain on the teachers, and even on the students, the classes necessarily being held in the evenings after all alike had accomplished their necessary daily business, so that the Working Men's Colleges set up in many busy towns did not greatly flourish. Some Manchester merchants next provided an example of a more comprehensive kind: perhaps it might not be necessary to arrange separate instruction for grades of the population. Owens College in Manchester was opened (1852) as a non-denominational college for men, the first of the modern colleges destined to develop into a modern university (1880), "the university of the busy," scientific, democratic and non-sectarian, though not until a later date opened to women.

The example of Manchester was quickly followed by Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield, Birmingham, Newcastle and many other towns, which established colleges available for both sexes and all classes, while the particular requirements of working lads were specially met by Mechanics' Institutes and Polytechnics, introduced into England from Scotland, where they had taken root since 1823. In all these collegiate institutions it was discovered that the large majority of students sought instruction not in 'the humanities' but in scientific subjects.

Not till 1898 did the several institutions in London giving a collegiate education combine to form a true university for the capital, when some score of specialised bodies, scattered over the vast area of 'greater London,' were organised together to compose the modern university.

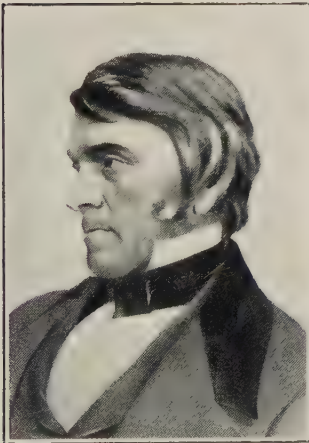
Long before this triumph of unity the old barriers had been demolished in Oxford and Cambridge. A *Commission* was directed by Government in 1850, to investigate their conditions, with the resultant enactment of various reforms in 1858, involving the abolition of all manner of medieval rules and the introduction of more regular examinations, of the study of natural science, and of a stricter standard of professorial duty. The universities themselves accomplished many other changes and reforms. In 1871 the



DR. ARNOLD



THE 7TH EARL OF
SHAFTESBURY



CARLYLE



ALFRED TENNYSON.

facing p. 70.

last surviving religious tests were abolished by Act of Parliament, and from that time continual additions and alterations have been adopted in both Oxford and Cambridge, including the building of new denominational colleges (both Nonconformist and Roman-catholic) and of Women's Colleges. The anticipated destitution of theological study for young clergy was quietly remedied by the establishment of clergy colleges by the bishops themselves in their respective sees, thus reproducing for modern needs the system of the Saxon episcopate.

The 'sixties and 'seventies were characterised by the rapid development and popularity of knowledge in the higher stages of education, particularly in the Natural Sciences, which now came ordinarily to monopolise the name of 'Science.'

In 1832 the foundation of the *British Association* had opened an era of scientific research which from about 1860 dominated intellectual progress not only in this country but elsewhere. The most famous book of the time, probably, is Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859). The most powerful scientific exponent was Huxley. From that time scientific methods revitalised most branches of study and transformed many departments of industry. Mining and engineering became revolutionised. Agriculture, medicine, warfare, art and all manner of manufactures were directed to new paths by chemistry. The new interpretations of life revealed by geology, biology and the cognate sciences so profoundly transformed historical and literary thought that many assumptions which for long ages had been taken for granted by educated Europe were discarded, making a fresh start necessary in most branches of study. Nor was this new start confined to the cultivated classes, but was popularly expounded in treatises which could be obtained and understood by any intelligent person. There was everywhere an enthusiasm in teaching and learning which stimulated book production, so that while from the 'twenties to the 'forties the spoken word of preacher and teacher was still the most powerful influence (e.g. Canning, Coleridge, Newman, Maurice), the printed book next began to take its place and exercised, if a slower, a perhaps more abiding influence. One consequence is that the names of the great authors have become more familiar to us than those of the oral teachers, so that the Victorian poets, novelists and men of science appear of more importance than the preachers and teachers whose influence was personal. They evoked and trained habits of character and intellect which continued to work actively, embodied in successive generations.

Another effect of the variety of the new knowledge was a dividing line now drawn between secular and religious education. Before the close of Victoria's reign educational organisers had come to think that the imparting of knowledge in general might be classified as secular and need not be related with any religious influence.

This allayed much of the strife between religious bodies which during the middle part of the period had sometimes engaged in an almost unseemly competition in the sphere of elementary education.

The two famous school societies of the early years of the century, the *National* and the *British*,¹ did not cease their activities, but it was acknowledged that voluntary efforts could not cover the entire nation. The two great Societies kept up permanent schools, but the *Dame*, the *Ragged* and other volunteer schools appeared and vanished again with the lives of those who provided them, as did, of course, the *Academies* (or private schools) which catered for middle-class children. Brougham, therefore, had proposed in 1820 an Act of Parliament to create schools in places not yet supplied. A rate was to be levied on the parish by the magistrates at Quarter Sessions, the incumbent of the parish was to appoint the schoolmaster, but the only religious teaching was to be reading from the Bible without any explanation—for fear of dogmatic influence. He thought that this would satisfy the Dissenters, yet his Bill was thrown out by their opposition because they refused any recognition of the authority of the clergy, and joined with the anti-Christian philosophers in demanding a purely secular education. This contest persisted for fifty years and eventually produced a sharp difference between the attitude of Church and State towards education, the State insisting upon a uniform system controlled by its own inspectors and objecting to volunteer tuition. Hence the financial aspect presented the principal difficulty. But the attitude of the Church was that the child was an individual with a right to be taught Christianity and that the Church had a duty to teach it, so that for the State to impose silence about it meant to legislate against it. In any case the training-colleges in which teachers were to be prepared for their career had been founded by voluntary donors, usually Churchmen.

The steps towards the modern system were at first slow. After the Reform Bill the Whig Cabinet had begun with extreme caution to feel its way towards an educational policy. It soon became clear that the majority of parents desired some religious basis for education, that the clergy, the squires and other middle-class enthusiasts who provided most of the funds and the workers expected this basis to be that of the Church of England, but that the Dissenters, Roman-catholics and Free-thinkers would combine to oppose Church management. Melbourne, therefore, sanctioned a small grant of £20,000 to be divided between the two societies, and when the Commons had grown accustomed to the annual grant a small Government Department was set up—the ‘Committee of Council on Education’—which itself distributed the grants (1839) and inspected all the schools assisted. In time the Chairman of the Committee (‘Vice-President of the Council’) became a Minister for Education and responsible to Parliament (1857).

¹ See Vol. III of this *History*, chap. xxix (iii), p. 291.

The funds provided were, indeed, small, but great public spirit was shown by landowners and others, so that by combined State and voluntary effort large numbers of schools arose between 1840 and 1870.

Parliament sought to express impartiality and conciliate opposition by distributing a portion of the annual grant to Wesleyan, Roman-catholic and Jewish schools without inspection as to the method of religious instruction (1847, 1851), so that these were much freer than the Church schools. The grants of money were considerably increased so as to subsidise salaries, and at the same time fresh conditions of control were imposed. Lowe's *Revised Code* (1862) directed payments to be made on a kind of sliding scale in proportion to the correct answers made by the children in examinations. He called it "Payment by results," and boasted that "if it was costly it should at least be efficient, and if it was inefficient it should at least be cheap." In spite of the educational objections made to the theory of children as empty and equal jars, this payment system endured, with modifications, for forty years. Attention was strongly bent upon obtaining more schools and a more comprehensive education, which implied colleges for training teachers. The two great difficulties in the way of legislation were, the general reluctance to pay heavy local rates, and the political organisation of a demand for purely secular education, voiced strongly in Parliament but unpopular generally except in the Birmingham area.

At length Forster's Elementary Education Act of 1870 caused the Education Department to impose a complete scheme upon the country by creating *School Boards*, popularly elected in any district where the schools were insufficient. Every Board had power to build new schools, to take over any voluntary school offered to it, to make a rule for compulsory attendance in its district, and in the case of very poor parents to pay the fees for them; fees having been charged until this time, frequently 3*d.* a week, so as to provide for teachers' salaries.

In the *Board Schools* (as the new ones were named) 'undenominational' religious teaching was to be given by the teachers, the rule being that "no religious catechism or religious formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination" was permitted.¹

The drastic Act of 1870 was completed by several later Acts which made attendance at school compulsory and transferred most of the cost to the State, *i.e.* to the national taxes (1876, 1880, 1891). The expense increased enormously, owing partly to the ever-increasing number of teachers, inspectors and officials, and partly to the unexpected rivalry between Boards and Voluntary establishments. But the Local Government Acts, which enabled the County Councils and County Borough Councils to become the principal education authorities, marked the close of the unseemly

¹ Known from its originator as the Cowper-Temple clause.

competition, while the provision of a ladder of scholarships and 'free places' encouraged ability and ambition.

The tide of intellectual energy was stimulated by the Grand Exhibition of 1851 and by political events till it overflowed the ordinary channels of instruction, and young men living in thriving towns took to educating themselves by mutual effort in voluntary societies—statistical, literary, debating, musical, gymnastic, etc., the first-named having for object the assembling of reliable information. The population may be said to have experienced a kind of intellectual irrigation, and the generosity of private donors keeping pace with corporate energy, the 'sixties beheld a multiplication of colleges, polytechnics, mechanics' institutes, art galleries, etc. which might satisfy almost every demand in every district.

In the meantime the older grammar schools, founded long ago, were also inspected and reformed, and utilised to give a higher or 'secondary' education on modern lines, the *Endowed Schools Acts* (1869, 1874) being passed after much inquiry by Commissions. Seven famous ancient schools were individually regulated by Parliament, the rest were entrusted for reorganisation to a body of Commissioners.

These Acts modernised the way of using old endowments, and thus reformed without confiscation and without adding to taxation. They recognised, also, that a share in such education should be given to girls, whence sprang a rapid growth of *High Schools* for girls, founded by voluntary efforts, and soon supplemented by voluntary foundations of colleges for women. Indeed, the latter half of the Victorian age witnessed a larger generosity in educational endowments than had ever been seen. Nor was it long before the jealous temper of competition yielded to the co-operative and generous temper of true scholarship. The Government did its part by sanctioning universities in as many towns as possible. In other words, advanced education and the acquisition of a degree were recognised as desirable for large numbers, not only for a knot of lads intended to become politicians, clergy, or men of fashion. A good instance of the change of temper within one generation was exhibited in Lancashire. When Manchester (Owens College) first proposed to apply for a university charter, it was actually opposed by Liverpool, on the ground that 'of course' no other city in the North could ever obtain such another charter, and thus in the inevitable competition for students Manchester would be unfairly favoured. The Manchester College frankly acknowledged the justice of this objection, a logical application of 'Free-trade' theory and competitive habits which was only solved by brigading Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds into a tripartite university for a number of years, until it was discovered that universities need not be encouraged by artificial scarcity, when each of the three procured a separate charter. Nearly every large town tried to follow their example.

The greatest name in public school education is that of Thomas Arnold, Headmaster of Rugby 1828-42, who is to be remembered as the pioneer of modern instruction, not instead of, but mingled with, the classical instruction which had been the basis of learning for a thousand years. There were others who had learned with him or from him the ideas of individual influence, of confidence, morality, co-operation, and the appeal to lofty Christian standards, which were the inspiration of the new public school method : such men as Thring of Uppingham, and James Prince Lee of King Edward's School, Birmingham, the master of Benson, Lightfoot, and Westcott.

When the lads trained by such great men went in their turn to Oxford or Cambridge, the vigour of new thought pulsed through the ancient channels and thence flowed to the provincial schools and colleges.

The provision of universal schooling was supplemented by a considerable provision of the tools of self-education in the form of public libraries, museums and picture galleries, and Schools of Art or Music were added in many towns. Long before the end of the century books and lectures could be obtained at so small a cost of money that the supply seemed to outrun the demand. Englishmen seldom prize highly what is to be had for nothing, nor would lazy minds make the mental effort to use the means of knowledge so lavishly provided for them.

There was, indeed, a devotion to 'practical utility' which often militated against the intellectual utilities. While the 'business men' were raising noble public buildings and collecting art treasures, they complacently cleared away anything inconvenient, however beautiful. As in the eighteenth century, 'modern progress' was too apt to mean woods and old buildings thrown down, old statues and pictures 'lost,' and any hideous proceeding tolerated if the perpetrator could allege a few shillings of saving or profit thereby. The famous theological library bequeathed by Archbishop Tenison to St. Martin-in-the-Fields was sold to procure funds for elementary education, and so 'save the rates,' though the parish contained numbers of prosperous persons.

And all the while the natural beauty of England was the prey of any speculator, manufacturer or corporation. In the Midlands and the North they turned streams into mill-power, dwarfed gems of architecture by huge and ugly buildings, piled their rubbish upon green meadows and made open sewers of the rivers.

Even when poets and artists touched finer feelings, the usual result was an onslaught of destructive trampling in wood and valley or the monopolising of lovely places by the mansions of well-to-do egoists. It was the devotees of Scott, Wordsworth or Ruskin who converted 'Brignall Banks' into refuse heaps, made of Derbyshire a vast railway junction, poisoned half the waters of Yorkshire and Lancashire, and filled solitary dales and romantic

ruins with the machinery of rough amusements. Men of taste who treasured Constables and Turners on their walls would cheerfully poison an oak plantation, or pay honour to antiquity by replacing genuine Gothic building by mock Norman or Jacobean.

The engulfing of England by industrial ugliness met, at last, with a considerable check at the hands of Parliament on the score of health. The unpopular protagonist of the severe new Poor Law of 1834, Edwin Chadwick, devoted the next ten years of his strenuous life to a crusade on behalf of the national health. The threat of cholera enabled him to procure at last the *Public Health Act* of 1848.

The doctors and men of science, in the height of their repute in the 'sixties and 'seventies, were powerfully aided by Disraeli, whose Home Secretary, Sir Richard Cross, carried a more drastic *Public Health Act* (1875) upon which has risen the present national system.

In spite of Irish and other obstruction, the Conservative Ministry of 1874-80 carried a programme of useful Acts—the pollution of rivers was checked; enclosure of open spaces was stopped, and steps were taken to ensure the access of the public to them. The restoration of Epping Forest to the citizens of London might seem an echo from the Middle Ages.

X

INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL FORCES (*continued*)

(B) THE CHURCH IN THE STATE

(i)

THE substitution of Parliament for the Crown in 1689 had, in reality, been a staggering blow to the Church, altering its position without its consent. It meant that the Church, instead of being ruled under the Crown by its own constitutional chiefs, was to be ruled by a political and lay body. Its hierarchy, the bishops, were now themselves governed, not by an individual sovereign but by a popular assembly collected by votes cast for political reasons.

In the sovereign the clergy might see an authority beyond that of mere political government, which they could not in a fortuitous crowd of individuals. They might at all events reach the sovereign—a Charles, a Mary, a Victoria, but not a mass of M.P.'s. The Crown could be impartial and responsible, the House of Commons, neither.

In practice, the control of an absolute Parliament proved more unfair to Churchmen than that of an absolute Star Chamber had ever been to Puritans, for the principle adopted by the reformed House of Commons was inherited from Whig and Puritan tradition of a past era.

The national Church was during the eighteenth century regarded, like the national navy or army, as a well-manned institution useful for certain public purposes, as education, or poor-relief, or keeping the masses in order: an institution to be administered like the others by an omniscient Parliament, and especially to be restrained from competition with other interests or institutions recognised by parliamentary constituencies as in the same field of business.

Hence the wide acceptance of a theory of equal but conflicting claims from the Church and all sectarian bodies, the latter being thought of somewhat as a league of small states balancing a large one. Minds trained by politics and commerce could readily adopt such a conception, and in course of time journalists came to count the national Church itself as one of 'the sects.'

The parliamentary idea of fairness was apt to be neutrality, usually the neutrality of ignoring a question. If the Church were in a majority, it could afford to be generous; if not, it became automatically in the wrong.

One effect had been the strengthening of the 'orthodox' sects which were permitted by Parliament to contract themselves, as it were, out of the State regulations for religion, because any Body formally notifying itself as a Nonconformist religious society had a legal position under the Toleration Act and later Acts, while the Church, having been regulated since 1660 by the Act of Uniformity and other Acts, was left throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries subject to their provisions while at the same time incapacitated from protest or fresh organisation by the abeyance of Convocation. Nonconformists were exempted from Church rates under Victoria, and the agitation against a rate might be used, as Dr. Hook found in Leeds, to deprive a church of necessary implements. In similar fashion the law of 1846 which commanded the closing of shops on Sunday was not to apply to Jews, Nonconformists or Roman-catholics, *i.e.* it imposed a commercial disability on Churchmen.

On the other hand, there was no effective provision that the patrons of livings need be members of the Church, even when a Lord Chancellor caused the Crown to sell the presentation rights of 300 very small livings to the squires, so that a non-churchman patron might, and sometimes did, appoint an incumbent qualified only to smooth the path of a propagandist rival. So, too, did the ancient rule by which all male adult parishioners had a right to attend the vestry meeting remain in force, and it was possible for the Easter vestry meeting to become an annual Nonconformist attack on the parish clergy—a proceeding which in at least one case (Manchester) resulted in the abolition of a famous and popular musical service.

Another result was that a genuine opposition might arise between the Church and the State view of some large question, such as Education, with regard to which it was impossible for convinced Churchmen to accept the secularist recommendation to exclude religious teaching from elementary schools rather than allow the young to acquire a habit of going to the parish church.

(ii)

The ferment of thought and enthusiasm which agitated the nation in the 'thirties and 'forties of the nineteenth century is impossible to analyse except very roughly, because in every section of the population it found different modes of expression—political, theological, social, financial, etc. In any attempt at narrative it is necessary to distinguish the leading movements, but it must be remembered that they were in progress simultaneously, so that many persons were active in more than one, while often a man's hopeful idealism on large questions was only matched by his pessimism over some detail which to him seemed to compromise a principle.



REV. CHARLES SIMEON.

facing p. 78.

The triumph of materialism in English thought after 1800 was in the 'twenties already being challenged on both the practical and the theoretical sides, for, if it had since its adoption by Government brought prosperity to certain classes, it inflicted misery on others, and the well-satisfied middle-class was being menaced in that security which was its ideal by the loud claims of the working men to obtain a share in its prosperity. Moreover, Materialism, in its essence the doctrine that wealth consists in money and in quantities of things, was being challenged by thinkers who energetically declared it to be false. In the 'thirties, on the whole, reforming energy was directed chiefly into political and theological channels, in the 'forties into more directly social—or practical—directions.

But the temper which inspired such great changes was both moral and intellectual and was fired by the teaching of a variety of groups or schools of thought led by preachers—many called them prophets—differing widely in type.

There may be distinguished (A) the Christian and (B) the non-Christian (sometimes anti-Christian) leaders.

(A) Of the distinctively religious movements which affected powerfully considerable numbers of persons, the chief were :—

(1) The Evangelical or Calvinist movement¹ (nicknamed popularly 'Low Church'), in which the greatest leader was still Simeon of Cambridge.

(2) The Oxford movement (nicknamed 'High Church,' or Tractarian) from about 1833.

(3) The teaching of those who termed themselves 'Liberal' but were inevitably nicknamed 'Broad Church'—Arnold, Jowett, Stanley, who desired to abolish definitions and boundaries.

(4) Some individual pioneers who refused to attempt to form any party at all—Hook, Hare, Maurice, Kingsley, Trench, Robertson, Vaughan.

(5) The older and recognised Nonconformist bodies ('orthodox Dissent').

(6) The newer and more speculative sects, particularly the Unitarians, of whom John and Harriet Martineau were the most famous.

The last two groups, like the first, had been active and noticeable before the great French war ended in 1815, but the first was by far the most numerous.

(B) But there were other schools of thought and reform which disclaimed any religious sentiment. There were the *Utilitarians*, whose great name was Bentham, the inspirer of the reform of English Law, but better known popularly by his dictum that the

¹ Described in Vol. III of this *History*, chap. xxix (i).

aim of government and of civilised mankind ought to be "the greatest good of the greatest number." One of his most effective disciples was Brougham, Lord Chancellor and educational pioneer. There were the *Free-thinkers*, whose great name was John Stuart Mill, a philosopher who placed all stress on the processes of reason, and who first took up seriously the doctrine proclaimed earlier by Shelley and Godwin, that Woman had equal rights with Man.

There were the *scientific* pioneers, whose greatest name in the 'thirties is still Priestley, reformer, republican and Unitarian, and victimised on these counts by the mob of Birmingham, who destroyed the records of his discoveries. They founded the *British Association for the Advancement of Science* in 1832, but the epoch of their powerful influence comes rather later, in the 'sixties.

Finally, there are the famous Victorian authors of the reforming age: Dickens, Tennyson, Browning, Carlyle, Ruskin and many others, men who can no more be classified than the great preaching reformers with whom they had much in common.

Of course none of these groups of famous men arose spontaneously out of a sea of apathy. In most instances two generations at least were active, and their changes (as earlier with the Wesley family) are significant of influences operating widely among thousands of other men: *e.g.* Simeon was trained by Venn, Keble and Hook by their fathers, country parish priests, like themselves, but Newman had been bred up a Calvinist and Maurice a Unitarian. In both the universities there were scholars of the older type, especially Whately at Oxford, still imparting a strong intellectual impulse which sometimes impelled their disciples on to other paths than their own. Powerful among the springs of inspiration which the new leaders themselves acknowledged were still those two old and famous books, *The Whole Duty of Man* and *Law's Serious Call*, but more powerful were the poetry of Wordsworth and the philosophical addresses of Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

(iii)

The great religious revival of this period in the Church of England was the 'Oxford Movement' (*from* 1833), named from the university which was its cradle, as Cambridge had been that of Simeon's Evangelical revival. The two schools, though truly to be regarded as complementary, were at the time strongly opposed to each other.

Where the Evangelicals stressed the individualist principle and Calvinist doctrines, the Oxford School stressed the corporate principle and sacramental doctrine. The former took 'Protestant' as a battle-cry, the latter 'Catholic.' The former quoted Luther, Calvin and the English Puritans, the latter the Fathers of the Church and the English theologians of the seventeenth century.

The most famous of the Oxford leaders are Keble, Pusey and

Newman. John Keble was a poet-scholar, a disciple of Wordsworth, who spent most of his life as a parish priest in the country, a modern George Herbert. In *The Christian Year*, a volume of poems which for over half a century exercised a strong influence, he indicated the more spiritual side of the teaching of the Church, on lines mystical rather than logical, at that date (1827) very unusual. A university sermon by him in 1834 on 'National Apostasy,' called forth by the Government suppression of ten Irish bishoprics, marked the beginning of the definite *Movement*.

Pusey was a very learned professor whose chosen task was to rebut the attacks on Christianity which were being made by certain continental critics (Strauss, Renan). His aim was to unite all Christian bodies in one Church so as to present a joint resistance to infidelity. His preaching and teaching, in which he appealed constantly to "the Church before the division of East and West," deeply impressed his hearers, but while he was constructing in theory modes of reunion between Romans and Greeks, and of English, French, German and Spanish national Churches, his dream was dissolved by an outburst of wrath at home, provoked by the propaganda of the Oxford men, and especially of Newman.

John Henry Newman, vicar of the University Church, attracted veneration and affection by his wonderful eloquence and the personal charm of his character. After Keble's remarkable sermon Newman planned and largely composed a series of brief and startling addresses to the clergy, entitled *Tracts for the Times*, expounding the doctrines of the Church of England according to the Prayer Book and the seventeenth-century divines. The keynote was insistence on sacramental religion, and involved opposition to Calvinism and a clear assertion of a greater affinity with the Roman and Eastern Churches than with Protestantism. Little as the authorities in Oxford cared for Evangelicalism, they were far more alarmed by any apparent approach to Romanism, and strong indignation had already been expressed, and much controversial literature published, when Newman's celebrated *Tract XC* compelled official notice to be taken of the attitude of these college tutors and clergy. The Bishop of Oxford and the Vice-Chancellor of the university expressed their disapproval; so did Archbishop Whately at Dublin. Newman and several of his friends joined the Roman-catholic Church, but the rest, with Keble and Pusey, continued on their original lines to strengthen the corporate and sacramental teaching of the English Church, divergent alike from both Evangelicalism and Romanism.

A passion for 'Unity' was actuating many of the strongest and loftiest minds at that time. Dr. Arnold of Rugby, almost at the opposite pole to Pusey, even advocated an Act of Parliament to decree a union of the Church of England with orthodox Dissent; one of those programmes of abstract thinkers typical of the early Victorian era, expounded with zeal, heard with respect, but

inoperative because no sect or party could be practically touched by the idea.

Among the apostles of *unity* was Maurice. He spent the effective part of his life in London, which was now acknowledged to be the principal centre of intellectual influence, far outweighing Oxford, Cambridge or Edinburgh. Maurice taught a spiritual churchmanship somewhat akin to Keble's. He took a curious part in the burning controversies of the day, endeavouring to interpret opponents to each other in hope of reconciling them, with the usual result that both sides rejected his explanations and agreed only in anathematising him. But it was not in controversy that his strength lay. He was a pioneer in the practice of Christian fellowship: from him Kingsley learned the principles which he expounded in *Alton Locke*.

Maurice's profound thought and intricate style of writing were not adapted to producing broad popular effects, but his personal influence inspired a host of men and women who carried the Maurician ideals to other cities and inspired with them subsequent generations.

Among them are to be remembered two great scholars and religious teachers, Hort, the Cambridge professor, and Lightfoot, Bishop of Durham, whose character won the trust of colliery workers and colliery owners so perfectly that once, in a great industrial disturbance, both sides besought him to mediate between them, and abode by his decision: three eminent literary men, Hutton of *The Spectator*, Charles Kingsley and Thomas Hughes of *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (a picture of Rugby under Arnold): Vansittart Neale, who expended two fortunes in an endeavour to establish among some poor working men a Christian Social Community, and Octavia Hill, the pioneer of reform in the housing of the London poor, whose *Life and Letters* affords vivid pictures of both intellectual and artisan life in London.

But it is not possible to name all the striking individual leaders, either before or after Maurice. One very eminent outside the arena of London was W. F. Hook (afterwards Dean of Chichester), who, at first in Coventry, then in the greater city of Leeds, had begun, ten years before Newman, to defend and interpret the English Church and her true place in the life of the nation, and had inaugurated what amounted to a religious revival in Yorkshire and Lancashire.

It was time for a defence if the Church was to persist, for there was in the 'twenties and 'thirties a real and widespread opposition to its very existence which had been produced by various causes, the underlying reason being the stereotyped formality of the previous century, which had fostered a conception of the Church as a large piece of machinery, a convention. Cobbett had provided the working man with plentiful charges to hurl against the clergy and the Establishment, while the cultivated and the fashion-

able felt a repugnance to the mention of 'serious topics,' as being at once too personal and too controversial for good manners.

There was, in short, a pronounced dislike to any recognition of religion in practical conduct which was severely visited on the head of anyone who disturbed the comfort of inertia. When Maurice went to his first country cure he learned that the villagers had never had a resident clergyman among them and did not intend to have one, so that nobody in the parish would let a dwelling to him, till he announced that he should put up a tent in the churchyard. When Simeon became incumbent of the principal church in Cambridge the pew-holders locked up their pews, and as this failed to frighten away either parson or congregation, the churchwardens locked the doors. The service was held in improvised quarters and was densely attended, but Simeon was afterwards mobbed and pelted.

In these and other instances the fearless determination of the evangelising clergy quickly won the admiration and confidence of rich and poor, and by the middle of the nineteenth century persecution of this kind ¹ had died away.

(iv) THE CHURCH AND LEGISLATION

In the 'fifties direct attacks were made upon the recognised position of the Church of England in this country. The most sensational was the issue of a Papal Bull announcing the erection of Roman sees in England with territorial establishments and titles (1850). Such action was not unnatural after the abolition of Roman-catholic disabilities, but it provoked so much public indignation that Russell made one of his hasty bids for popularity by carrying (1851) an *Ecclesiastical Titles Act*. This Act declared the Bull 'null and void' and imposed a fine on any who should try to 'carry it into effect.' Hereupon *Punch* published its famous cartoon of the Prime Minister as a naughty boy chalking 'No popery' on Cardinal Wiseman's door and running away. No proceedings were or ever could have been taken under the Act, which was in time quietly repealed, as a dead letter. The ridiculous attempt to legislate against an assumption of titles by individuals was another nail in the coffin of Russell's political reputation, while for the rest of the century the widest tolerance and courtesy were displayed among the educated towards the activities of Roman-catholics, no objections being raised to their assumptions of precedence or the occasionally open challenge of such erections as a cathedral in Westminster or the splendid fane which dwarfs Norwich cathedral. Convents and schools arose swiftly, and monastic fraternities expelled from other countries safely made England their land of refuge and organisation.

¹ Alluded to in stories of the time : C. M. Yonge, *The Daisy Chain* ; Mrs. Thackeray Ritchie, *Jack the Giant-killer*.

Russell's temporary commotion somewhat diverted attention from the important step taken in 1850, on Gladstone's initiative, of again assembling Convocation, left in abeyance since 1717, and according to it liberty of discussion.

A very different kind of attack upon the *establishment* of the Church from that of the Papal Bull was the parliamentary abolition of compulsory *Church rates*. From Tudor times the Vestry had been the authority in each parish for both ecclesiastical and governmental purposes. The Vestry could, by the vote of a majority, impose a rate upon the parish for any purpose. The *Church rate* was one for the purpose of repairs, etc. to the church, the one public building which was the joint possession of the parishioners. Nonconformists had long protested against being obliged to pay it, and in 1868 an Act abolished 'compulsory Church rates,' *i.e.* left the support of the local church to voluntary contributions. This might appear to be a parliamentary acceptance of a view of the Church as one among a number of 'denominations,' a favourite term of the secularists.

The divergence of the Evangelical and Tractarian (or Low and High) parties among Churchmen, grievously as it compromised the acknowledged standard of the Church, at least roused a great deal of interest other than that of mere party controversy. The clash was really between the habits of the elderly and the enthusiasm of the young. But to many it looked like, and was therefore assumed to be, a rivalry between *Protestant* and *Romanising* principles. The former term became a battle-cry. "What has become of the old Protestant religion of England?" plaintively asked Queen Victoria, greatly puzzled.

The truth was that the meaning of that word had altered in three centuries. Its historical origin in Germany in the sixteenth century¹ meant nothing and was probably unknown to the controversialists who adopted it. It had come into general use here when Princess Elizabeth, daughter of James I, married a *Protestant* German prince. Thenceforth the term to us meant simply anti-papal. During the Puritans' supremacy it became invested with their special sentiment against episcopacy. Our foreign kings, William and George, emphasised *Protestantism* as a national principle, and the long Whig supremacy emphasised its anti-episcopal tendency. It stood for German and Swiss theology and lay control, and was largely endorsed by the Evangelical school of the earlier half of the Victorian age.

There arose in the 'sixties and 'seventies a considerable agitation in places where clergy of the High Church school, for the most part (though not always) disciples of the Oxford Tractarians, began to practise a ritual which was unusual, not having been seen in English churches for two centuries. Sometimes this ritual was

¹ In 1529, when six princes and fourteen cities signed a *Protest* against the decree of the imperial Diet at Spire.

that actually prescribed in the Prayer Book by rubrics which had been for generations habitually ignored; sometimes they were copied from ancient usages of the Church in pre-Reformation times. In either case it probably happened that part of the congregation sympathised with the more ornate ritual and part disliked it. Dissensions then ensued which sometimes led to suits at law against the High Church clergy, who were by their opponents derided as 'Ritualists.'

Now the law knew nothing of the distinction between 'parishioners' and 'congregation' which had come into existence in populous towns, though it knew much about the rights of patrons and incumbents and the limits of episcopal authority, all of which provided typical matter for lawsuits. That a bishop had no means of enforcing obedience among his clergy was a fact unknown to most persons. It was possible (as one occurrence showed) for a vicar to be deposed by the bishop and his successor appointed and for their rival supporters to dispute possession of the church, as if the eleventh century had returned. There arose among the more rigid of the Evangelical laity an agitation for legislation against 'Ritualism,' or at any rate for a strengthening of episcopal authority which was perceived to be moral but helpless unless voluntarily obeyed. The clergy themselves, however, had little desire for the imposition of discipline, and in the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury they protested against some new regulations which Archbishop Tait introduced.

It was with the view of closing the unseemly quarrels over the celebration of Divine Service that the Archbishop introduced, and the lawyers with Disraeli's assistance carried, a law known as the "*Public Worship Regulation Act*" (1875). The title suggested a principle, not unlike that of Elizabethan times, that the legislature should prescribe the main features of the ritual of the Church: yet this was not the original intention of the Act, which aimed at providing a machinery for enforcing the Acts of Uniformity, and thus (a) preventing individual clergy from adopting a ceremonial disliked by their parishioners, and (b) preventing cantankerous members of a congregation from creating disturbances because they themselves were displeased. But it proved, as usual, extremely difficult to provide a legal process to embody general principles, and especially religious principles. The bishops possessed no coercive powers, and the majority of the members of both Houses of Parliament held objections to restoring an actual authority. The lawyers were strongest in objecting, unless the Act were to be administered by themselves.

Lord Chancellor Cairns therefore took the proposed new law out of the Archbishop's hands and drew it up in accordance with the principle laid down by two former Chancellors (Hatherley and Selborne). They said: "If the minister be allowed to introduce at his own will variations in rites and ceremonies that seem to

him to interpret the doctrine of the service in a particular direction, the service ceases to be what it was meant to be, common ground upon which all Church people may meet." The legal mind assumed that the Elizabethan intention and Caroline definitions must be binding on the Victorian Church.

Authority was conferred on a secular judge to decide, in any case brought before him, whether the clergyman in question was, or was not, legally entitled to use the ritual in question. The case could be brought by the bishop, if three parishioners complained to him. The judge's decision was final, and a clergyman who disregarded it would be punished, like anyone else, by imprisonment for contempt of court.

This Act, then, withdrew from the parochial clergy a liberty which had been by custom theirs since the days of Elizabeth (except during the Protectorate), although the lawyers had recently emphasised the absolute responsibility of the incumbent for and within his church: "*The church is the Vicar's freehold*," they had declared, a definition which provided Hook with a disconcertingly impregnable position.

But the Act proved a painful failure. Many who were not interested in the grounds of contest disapproved of an Act produced to gratify popular clamour and legal pedantry in collusion. The point which baffled the lawyers was their treatment of resistance to the judge. Many of the clergy saw in the Act an admission of the subjection of the Church to lay authority, and a few, being tried, did refuse to obey, and were duly sent to prison. The distress of mind to the bishops concerned was very great, and the scandal of imprisonment inflicted upon earnest priests for such a reason was most damaging to the Church. The general public, which had been mildly horrified by 'ritualism,' was much more horrified by the punishment of a 'ritualist.' The Act had only increased the excitement it was intended to allay.

In the end the bishops unanimously avoided the use of this unlucky statute. The two Archbishops consented to act as a voluntary authority to decide any such question brought before them by any bishop. Their authority, being enjoined by the Prayer Book but not enforced by law-courts, was purely ecclesiastical and moral, so that once more the obstinate incumbent became freed from control. It was clear that where the modern temper forbade physical force, 'passive resistance' could defeat the law-courts: a remarkable lesson for the nation elicited by three Lord Chancellors.

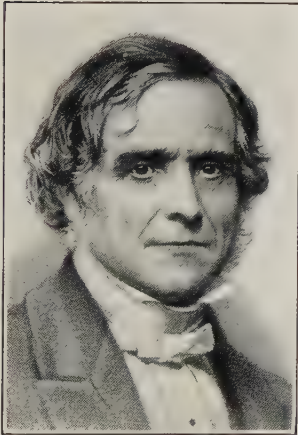
But controversy did not necessarily involve decay. A general agreement began to spread abroad that to the Church belonged responsibility for the paupers, the careless, prisoners, colonists, sailors and soldiers, and all such as were not specifically attached to some other particular religious society. The re-establishment of Convocation, the appeals for voluntary effort and funds, the ever-



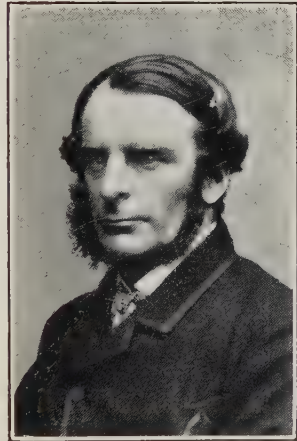
EDWARD BOUVERIE PUSEY.



CARDINAL NEWMAN.



REV. F. DENISON MAURICE.



REV. CHARLES KINGSLEY.

facing p. 86.

spreading influence of those who were carrying forward the standards of Hook and Maurice, or Stanley, Arnold and Jowett, or the Tractarians, all combined to stimulate a renewed energy in the Church of England, not necessarily antagonistic to other religious movements, and culminating in our own time in the *Enabling Act*, whereby Parliament at length loosened its legal clutch upon the Church of England, after nearly four centuries. Among the students of Tennyson, Ruskin, Browning and Matthew Arnold harmony was felt to be a more hopeful path than controversy, and spiritual and intellectual energy were more likely to fructify in co-operation than in rancour.

XI

IRELAND

(i) THE AGRARIAN PROBLEM (1848-80)

AFTER O'Connell the *Irish Question* entered on a fresh phase, the consequence of the famine, or rather of the sequel to the famine produced by the Ministries of Peel and Russell.

For some six or seven years after the famine the flight of the peasantry across the Atlantic recalled to readers of Gibbon the accounts of ancient national migrations; but those who willingly sought America as a land of promise were outnumbered by the reluctant refugees, evicted from their homes, carrying in their hearts solely hatred of the English nation, which to them appeared in the light of a tyrannical invader.

Of the huge sum expended by the Exchequer in famine-relief, the largest portion went to relief-workers, and the permanent effect of the new roads and railroads was to raise the value of the properties served by them. But the owners of these estates seemed unable to make any profitable use of their fresh facilities, mainly owing to the hampering legislation of the eighteenth century, which had extended to Ireland the inestimable blessing of the English land laws, practically chaining the owner to the estate which his predecessors or himself had drowned in debt.

Peel therefore devised and carried the *Encumbered Estates Act* (1850) to enable mortgage-burdened owners in Ireland to sell their lands, that these might pass into the hands of men able to "perform the duties of property towards the people": Peel reasoned from the customs of English landlords, but the purchasers of Irish estates wanted to make their property 'pay,' and they did so after a manner well known and detested in England in various periods during the three previous centuries. They turned a crowd of small and badly cultivated agricultural holdings into wide green grazing tracts, and let them to commercial graziers who intended to supply the English market. Cattle and sheep supplanted the pigs, oats and potatoes whereby a population had subsisted, however miserably. "*Dispossession* is still nine points of the law in Ireland," said Sir Horace Plunket. The landlords called it 'clearing' their estates; the remorselessness of the proceeding imbued the evicted population with an intense anger which instantly became a hatred of the English and England in every form.

Once across the Atlantic, the Irish exiles seldom devoted themselves (as did Scottish and English emigrants) to making new homes, not being by nature or habit good farmers. They developed political organisations, propagated their hatred of England, especially by secret societies, and collected large funds. Their avowed object was to establish in Ireland an independent republic.

In the meantime O'Connell's old party organisation had split into rival sections and exercised much less influence. In Ireland a '*Young Ireland*' party attempted in 1848 to get up a rising under Smith O'Brien, but failed. The more practical *Tenants League* agitated for a fairer land law, and when Derby's short-lived Ministry opened in 1852, Disraeli, who believed that the Irish difficulty was at bottom economic, inquired privately what they desired. They desired an Act to ensure to a tenant who was evicted, compensation for the improvements he had made on his farm. For whereas in England the landlord provided buildings, fences, drainage and repairs, and let his farms at a covenanted rent for a long term of years, in Ireland these things, if done at all, were done by the tenant, although farms were let only for short periods, and even annually. In Ulster alone was the tenant's right to his own improvements recognised by local custom, and if the land changed hands he was compensated. He could even pass on his farm himself to a fresh tenant by selling his tenancy. The rest of Ireland now aspired to similar terms, known as *Ulster Tenant Right* or 'the Three F's'—Fair rent, Fixity of tenure, and Freedom to sell tenancy.

Unfortunately Disraeli's good intentions came to nothing because Derby, sublimely indifferent to the fact that the Irish members held the balance of votes in the Commons, was skilfully 'drawn' in the Lords by a question on the rumoured negotiations with the Irish, and haughtily declaring that he repudiated any such ignominy for his Ministry, instantly beheld it turned out.

The Whigs who profited took care to avoid a similar fate themselves by distributing enough places among the Irish members to earn their votes¹ until the close of Palmerston's career.

Underlying the crying evils of rack rents, evictions and riots, of poverty, over-population and famine, and of religious rivalry and suspicion, there were the two deep-rooted causes of woe: (a) That the real wrong had been done to Ireland in time long past, and (b) that the Union of 1801 involved an anachronism in practice which formed an insoluble puzzle.

(a) Every change which had befallen Ireland produced a fresh set of circumstances which then had to be reckoned with; new owners and new laws produced rights or claims for succeeding generations. This, of course, was the lot of all nations throughout

¹ A story went that the Conservative Whip, being warned that a certain Irish member must be going to speak for the (Liberal) Ministry, since he was taking notes, replied, "Are you sure it was not gold?"

history, and what Henry II, or Henry VIII, or Cromwell did in Ireland, others had done in France, England and elsewhere. Only in Ireland, at all events after 1850, the orators and teachers of the population were accustomed to speak of the past disasters of their ancestors as if modern 'England' were responsible for them to-day, and the ignorant readily adopted this telescoping of time.

(b) However conscious an English minister might be of the maltreatment of the Irish in the ages of feudalism, or of the Tudors or the Puritans—and both Gladstone and Disraeli recognised that the past had inflicted great wrong—the real question for them in the present was, not how to revert to conditions several centuries back, but how should a civilised and progressive State deal with a part of its population whose one permanent characteristic was its refusal to progress?

The Scandinavian Vikings who had first settled the empty harbours of the Irish coast found the natives in a state of primitive tribalism and ceaseless warfare. They offered to the new-comers a simple barter of slaves and raw natural produce. They were still in the same conditions in the days of Henry II, of Richard II, of Henry VII.¹ Neither religion nor colonisation effected any change. The saints from whom the island loved to entitle itself were saints who left their own tribes to evangelise more hopeful Picts or Teutons, and Popes had adjured Henry II to put down pagan brutalities still dominant after six centuries of nominal Christianity. The varied experiments of English colonists from Henry II till Elizabeth succeeded little better: English and Welsh with their higher standards were always being submerged in the Irish chaos. Before the year 1500 Bristol had already given up carrying her surplus population across St. George's Channel and taken to exploring the Atlantic for a more promising resort.

Under the Stewarts a different method was tried, sovereignty being asserted and an attempt made to civilise from above by imposing first of all a framework of government. The details of each effort show a variety in the causes of failure, but the impenetrable bedrock is always the same: Irish custom could not be permeated by civilisation because native custom involved savagery and there was no desire to emerge from it.

One astute and successful chief had forbidden his clansmen to use the ploughs offered to them: with ploughing and sowing would come settlement and homes, and therewith the discarding of primitive tribal customs and of the chieftain's power.

The very few native chiefs whose ambition took a higher range found their fellows their remorseless foes: from Brian Boru to Tyrone or Parnell the abiding character of Irish history is jealousy of leaders, the identification of liberty with anarchy and of tuition with insult.

From 1860 a new movement, *Fenianism*, rapidly became active in Ireland.

¹ See Vol. II of this *History*, chap. xxii.

The *Fenian* Brotherhood were a secret society formed in the United States, whence its propagandists returned to their old home reinforced with fury and funds.

They adopted their name from ancient romantic legend, and their proceedings were indeed those of ancient savagery, armed with modern weapons. Whether or no any of their leaders had really been soldiers in the American civil war, they conveyed from the U.S.A. to Ireland a shipload of arms and recruits. Information, however, had reached the Government, which seized ship, passengers and cargo off the coast.

The rising, therefore, was contracted to a cutting of wires and assaulting isolated coastguards or policemen, but in unsuspecting England rather larger ebullitions came off which horrified a public accustomed to quiet and order.

The Fenians arranged an assembly at Chester, which was arrested piecemeal at the railway station, blew up a barrel of gunpowder outside Clerkenwell prison, killing or wounding over 100 private persons in the street, and succeeded in liberating three Fenian prisoners in Manchester. In this notorious case an armed band of thirty surrounded the prison van and killed the single policeman inside by firing through the keyhole. The three prisoners escaped, but nearly all of the attacking band were taken and tried for the murder of the policeman. Only three were executed, afterwards to be known among the Irish as 'the Manchester Martyrs.'

It was with absolute truth, if doubtful judgment, that Gladstone told the House in 1869 that "the influence of Fenianism was this—that when . . . the tranquillity of the great city of Manchester was disturbed, when the metropolis itself was shocked and horrified by an inhuman outrage . . . when the inhabitants of the different towns of the country were swearing themselves in as special constables for the maintenance of life and property—then it was when these phenomena came home to the popular mind, and produced that attitude of attention and preparedness on the part of the whole population of this country which qualified them to embrace, in a manner foreign to their habits in other times, the vast importance of the Irish controversy." Or, as the popular summary of the speech ran—"that the shooting of the Manchester policeman produced justice for Ireland."

Gladstone became Prime Minister in the last days of 1868. It was his belief that the sense of injustice was the motive force of Irish discontent and that measures of justice would allay it. He had already brought before the House of Commons the question of the *Irish Church*. The elections of 1868 which placed him in power had, indeed, been largely influenced by this subject, which incidentally procured for him the Roman-catholic votes.

"It is my mission to pacify Ireland," Gladstone had said when he received the royal commission to form a government, and his first proposal in the new Parliament was, as had been anticipated,

a measure for a revolutionary change of policy by severing the connection of Church and State in Ireland.

By the Disestablishment of the Irish Church (a recognised branch or partner of the English Church) Gladstone did not intend its destruction, but that the State should no longer recognise it. In effect, one provision of the Union of 1801 was to be repealed. The Church in Ireland was to become a voluntary and self-organising body, but not till after the State had suppressed as many of its rich dignities as might be considered due only to past political policy. Ten bishoprics were abolished and a proportionate amount of revenue was 'appropriated' to the Exchequer of the State, to be used for asylums and other provision for relief of Irish distress. Gladstone believed that the removal of a spectacle which must aggrieve the Irish people—the spectacle of an Establishment endowed with lands and tithes, ministering to a minority and staffed habitually from England, while the clergy of the majority, themselves Irish, were provided for by the voluntary efforts of the poor or by contributions from abroad—would remove a barrier between government and governed and convince the latter of the impartiality of the former. The Prime Minister had been assured of this by (Cardinal) Manning, a personal friend, whom he consulted. Pains were taken to provide legal machinery to administer for the disestablished body the considerable endowments still remaining to it, in such a way as to capitalise a very great sum.

The Bill became law in 1869, in spite of a sharp disagreement between the Lords and the Commons, which was overcome chiefly by the efforts of the Queen and of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Tait.

The disestablished Church organised itself by a synod, guided by Trench, now Archbishop of Dublin.

The strong opposition which met the Disestablishment Bill sprang from the close connection of England with Ireland. - It was not possible for Englishmen to regard the Church purely geographically; Gladstone's majority was mainly composed of Roman-catholics, Nonconformists, Scotch and Welsh members. English Churchmen therefore for the most part regarded the Act as a long step towards disestablishment in England; and even of those who, for the sake of Irish peace, were willing to sacrifice the position of the Church in Ireland, many were indignant at the transference of half its revenue to secular purposes; they called this *Confiscation*, though the term used was *appropriation*.

Disestablishment was followed at once by an *Irish Land Act* (1870), which provided for a certain proportion of compensation to a tenant if evicted not by reason of his own faults. Bright added some clauses providing for loans to tenants who desired to purchase their own holdings.

The Act did not go far enough to satisfy the Irish, while it perturbed many owners and lawyers in England, where the idea of a

'dual ownership' of land, neither landlord nor tenant being an absolute owner, was totally foreign to modern custom and law.

All the while Fenian disturbances were rife, landlords' agents were violently attacked, rents remained unpaid, new tenants were pillaged and threatened, farms burned and cattle slaughtered. The well-to-do were scared away and the remaining population terrorised.

Gladstone, therefore, was obliged to pass a "Peace Preservation Act" to give the Irish executive stronger powers. It was unfortunate that the wholesale extension to Ireland, in former times, of the entire English judicial system had introduced legal procedure which imposed orderly English methods upon a people still in a semi-civilised, semi-tribal stage. Juries in Ireland gave verdicts according to their sympathies, their fears, or their kinship, as the Welsh did in Bacon's time, while all the agents of the law were regarded as natural enemies of the people and the obstruction of them in their duty became a universal fine art. The use of the English system made it impossible for the Irish executive legally to take prompt measures without special permission, a permission only obtainable by a special Act of Parliament which was invariably called a *Coercion Act*. Coercion being, like Confiscation, a 'bad word,' every Ministry which required one handed to the Opposition a rod for its own belabouring. Grey, Peel and Russell had required special Acts six times since 1832, and Gladstone had to hear his similar measure called a Coercion Act.

That it should be necessary after his two Acts of justice was galling to him and his followers and lessened the value of the concessions given, especially as the landlords regarded the Land Act as legalised robbery. Their estates, whether inherited or purchased, had been for some 200 years subject to sale, mortgage or settlement, in the same manner as English and Scottish property. If Parliament were to take from them their legal rights over their property, substituting an income drawn from rents fixed by somebody else, they would suffer a virtual confiscation inflicted by the Ministry in the vain effort to undo historical events in ages past, or rather, as the Opposition suggested, in the hope of pleasing a political party which used in Ireland violence, in Parliament obstruction, and was sustained by money from a foreign country. If this might be done by Act of Parliament, they asked, what security was there for any property?

Gladstone's final Irish Bill was a curious *University Bill* which endeavoured to combine Protestant Nonconformists and Roman-catholics in a purely secular university, which was to do without any professors of theology, philosophy or modern history—in order to avoid controversy—and was to be financed out of the endowments of Trinity College, the old Church institution, at Dublin. But the measure, offending all three interests, was defeated.

A few years later Disraeli provided a humbler but more workable

university system in the form of an examining body, granting degrees after the model of the then University of London.

The Conservative Cabinet of 1874-80 undertook no large Irish measures, but during that period a new political force, the *Home Rule Party*, was being organised by Parnell, the worthy successor of O'Connell, not only in Ireland, but also in England, France, Canada and the United States, wherever there were either discontented Irishmen or other enemies of England. The aim was avowedly to obtain from Parliament a measure for the control of all Irish internal affairs by Irishmen in Ireland. Parallel with the *Home Rule* federation was the Irish national *Land League*, of which Parnell was president, and which aimed at the reduction of high rents and the transference of ownership from landlord to tenant in the future. "Fair rent" ought to be paid, he declared, for thirty years, but after that the holdings should become automatically the property of the rent-payers.

Parnell easily combined his two creations to force concessions both from Parliament and from Irish landlords. If farms were too highly rented, he told the tenants, let them offer the landlord a *fair* rent, and if he refused it, pay none: "If you refuse to pay unjust rents, if you refuse to take farms from which others have been evicted, the Land question must be settled, and settled in a way that will be satisfactory to you." When, however, farms cleared by eviction were taken by fresh tenants from a distance, retaliation by all kinds of violence usually followed, whether at the hands of Fenians or Land-leaguers. This was apt to bring down punishment at the hands of the law. Parnell then counselled a wiser way of revenge, "a more Christian and charitable way," which broke no statute and therefore involved no such risks as attended murder and arson: "When a man takes a farm from which another has been unjustly evicted you must shun him in the roadside when you meet him; you must shun him in the streets of the town, you must shun him in the shop, you must shun him in the fair-green and in the market-place, and even in the place of worship. By leaving him alone; by isolating him from the rest of the country as if he were a leper of old—you must show him your detestation of the crime he has committed."¹

This punishment of *shunning* had long been among the occasional resources of an angry peasantry, and not in Ireland alone, but never before had it been wielded so unanimously. It obtained its modern name (*boycotting*) from its application to a Captain Boycott, the agent for a large estate. Nobody would work for him, and when fifty Ulstermen volunteered to get in his crops they had to be protected by 2,000 soldiers, for whom all supplies were fetched from a distance. "Crops to the value of £350 were harvested at a total cost to the Government of £3,500." A few such examples

¹ Quoted in Eversley's *Gladstone and Ireland*, p. 125. But differing reports have been printed; that here given appears to me to be the best authenticated.

sufficed. Nobody dared to take a vacant farm and no employer dared offend his labourers, while evictions almost ceased. Parnell had fulfilled his boast that the Land League would stop evictions and outrages: "It is owing to the Land-leaguers getting their way and not needing outrages," wrote W. E. Forster, Gladstone's Irish Chief Secretary.

The engineer of this successful Irish rebellion, for it proved to be no less, was Charles Stuart Parnell, an Irish landowner, who, like so many leaders of the Irish, was not of Irish race.

He belonged to an English family seated in Ireland for several generations, but his American mother had imbued him with that hatred of England and Englishmen which was in her time frequent among her fellow-countrymen.

Gladstone's Acts considerably allayed agrarian disturbance, but alarmed the minority as to the future. Certain Protestants thereupon again began to advocate the political alliance of all Irishmen on behalf of a purely Irish government—"the establishment of an Irish Parliament with full control over our domestic affairs." This policy was aptly named "HOME RULE," to indicate that it was purely for their domestic, or *home* interests that the inhabitants of Ireland desired self-government. For five or six years from 1870, covering the transition of government from the Liberals to the Conservatives, the Irish party in Parliament, led by Isaac Butt, in vain endeavoured to call attention to their claims by correct constitutional methods.

When Parnell succeeded Butt as leader of the party, just after Disraeli's retirement to the Lords, he relinquished orthodox procedure as being useless. "The English are too comfortable in this House, they are too comfortable everywhere," said one of the party; "we shall never do any good till we take an *intelligent interest* in English questions."

Parnell had the ability to teach both the Irish in Ireland and the Irish members in the House of Commons how to defy the Government with safety to themselves, pitting wit against strength and discarding English standards. In Ireland, in the contest of anarchy with 'Castle' rule, the *boycott* made life impossible for men disapproved of by the Land League. In the House, 80 Irish members obedient to Parnell's direction could almost paralyse proceedings, and the fact that they sat and acted as a compact phalanx caused them to be universally reckoned as '*the*' Irish party; the 23 members for North Ireland, sitting and voting as Conservatives or Liberals, were habitually ignored. Parnell was a most remarkable master of tactics. But his work was solely destructive; in Ireland it meant increasing poverty and waste; in Parliament, the waste of talent—using (*e.g.*) the subtle brains of Mr. Sexton just like the incoherent verbosity of Mr. Biggar, merely to fritter away the time of the House—was equally apparent. And though men called him the 'uncrowned king of Ireland,' he

never met the tests of responsibility and construction, never did more than wield an obstructive and destructive opposition.

The 'intelligent interest' of these Irish members took the form of asking incessant questions and making interminable speeches, so that Bills could not be carried because all the time allotted was wasted; from 1877 to 1880 the record of the House of Commons was almost a blank.

Parnell's Irishmen disclaimed any connection with the Liberal party, but in the elections of 1880 they threw a powerful weight into the Liberal scales, Irish voters being directed to vote against Disraeli as "the mortal enemy of your country and race."

Gladstone's majority was not due to Irish voters alone, but he was in any case bound to make a fresh attempt to pacify Ireland, and in 1881 he brought in three Bills—for the protection of life and property (by the usual special processes), for prohibiting private persons from possessing weapons and explosives, and for a Land Court to determine rents and proceedings connected therewith. This court had a wide authority, but only over such tenants and landlords as chose to apply to it. It was anticipated that they would, but should they not agree to do so, landlords could not be compelled. Further, the State would advance money to tenants who wanted to purchase their holdings, with precise arrangements for repayment. No large number, however, took advantage of this offer.

The Act of 1880 virtually gave to the Irish tenantry what they had demanded and expected in 1870, but the Home Rulers now repudiated it as insufficient. Parnell had no intention of allowing any pacification, and he had already, in that very year, publicly stated what were his ultimate aims in the United States, which he visited in order to procure more financial assistance. Newspapers reported his words and converted his addresses to Americans into proclamations for Englishmen or Irishmen everywhere.

The American Congress at Washington had invited him to address them, and in a carefully worded speech he declared that his intention was a total alteration of land tenure in Ireland: the State ought to expropriate the land and make the tenants owners. At a great meeting at Cincinnati he spoke out further: "None of us (he said) will be satisfied until we have destroyed the last link which keeps Ireland bound to England."

For what he had spoken in a foreign country it was doubtful if the English law could attack him. But the special powers conferred by Parliament on the Irish executive gave Mr. Forster the opportunity of arresting Parnell and some others of the leading agitators (1881) upon suspicion of instigating resistance to the law. The 'suspicion' was a moral certainty, but the skilful wording of speeches would probably enable the agitators to escape if tried. They were therefore retained in Kilmainham prison, untried.

There followed the curious intrigue known as 'the Kilmainham

Treaty' (1882). Ministers found themselves in a position occupied more than once in older times by English administrators in Ireland. The chiefs were caught, but the anarchic warfare waged by the disorganised peasantry was all the worse. It seemed as if the prisoners wielded the only authority which reached the population, and that compromise with Parnell might be the only way out of the deadlock. But Gladstone reckoned without the Irish Secretary, Forster. By a series of private letters and messages an understanding was arrived at between the Prime Minister and his supporter, Chamberlain, on the one hand, and Mr. Parnell on the other, without any statement of binding terms which could be produced for argument in Parliament. Forster, however, an absolutely straightforward man and the sole constitutional repository of power in Ireland, refused to be the agent of this understanding or even to keep a useful silence about it. He resigned his office, as did the Lord Lieutenant, and when, on the prisoners being set free, a storm of questions and denunciations was let loose in the House of Commons, the discredit of parleying or bargaining with treasonable rebels was fixed upon Gladstone in a way most damaging to his credit with the British electorate.

Whatever the so-called 'treaty' may have arranged, it was immediately cancelled by the murder of Forster's successor, Lord Frederick Cavendish, together with the Permanent Under-Secretary, Mr. Burke, in open daylight in the Phoenix Park in Dublin.

This crime was manifestly not instigated by Mr. Parnell (who indeed complained that the action of his compatriots was to "stab me in the back"), but as he was obviously unable to lay the spirits of anarchy he had called forth in Ireland, much more rigorous measures were adopted to put down violence. At the same time an *Arrears Bill* conferred security and relief upon very poor tenants.

This Land Act, accepting the *three F's*, did, in fact, abrogate English economic standards in Ireland, so far as annual tenants were concerned. Leaseholders, however, remained bound by their covenants. Thus two inconsistent principles were endorsed. The consequences were hardly what the sanguine Prime Minister had expected. Naturally the rents fixed by the Land Courts were declared by the tenants to be too high and by the landlords too low; which suggested an impartial justice in the arbitrators, but kept the tenants agitating for further reduction. Leaseholders felt aggrieved and clamoured for relief. Worst of all was the reappearance of 'rack-rent' in a fresh form. Freedom to sell a tenancy had simply transferred the bids of competitors to the selling tenant, who now himself cheerfully reaped the 'rack' (or competition) profit.

The brief interval of Salisbury's Ministry remedied the failings of the 1881 Land Act by the Ashbourne Acts (1885 and 1887), which gave relief to leaseholders, lowered many 'fixed' rents

afresh, and gave lavish assistance, by loans from the British Treasury, to tenants where landlords were willing to sell. The loans were to be repaid in forty-two annual payments, and as the terms fixed made these repayments actually lower than the rents, the Act was used to a very large extent and to the value of ten millions of pounds found by British taxpayers, but in the end, for the most part, repaid. A renewal of this expedient on still more lavish terms was made by the Wyndham Act of 1903.

XII

IRELAND (*continued*)

(ii) GLADSTONE AND HOME RULE

GLADSTONE'S second Ministry broke up in the summer of 1885 from the dissensions within his Cabinet and he resigned without dissolving Parliament.

Lord Salisbury consented to form a government for the remainder of the session, in spite of the immense majority in the Commons against the Conservatives, in order to carry on necessary national business: "A government of Caretakers," scoffed Chamberlain, but a series of short practical Acts were carried and the threatening conditions of foreign affairs taken in hand.

Owing to a new register of the electorate being in progress it was not possible to summon a new Parliament till the next year. When the dissolution came Gladstone appealed to the electors to return him with so decisive a majority as to make him independent of the Irish party. Whether or no in response to this broad hint (which old-fashioned Liberals indignantly murmured was a threat) he obtained a sweeping majority; the Government was defeated on an amendment to the Address, moved by Collings, a Birmingham Radical; Salisbury immediately resigned and Gladstone resumed office (February 1886).

That he would frame some measure for Irish self-government had already been announced in the newspapers, on his son's information, but not by himself, before the elections were quite over, and the first *Home-rule* Bill, which he introduced in 1886, fulfilled the general anticipation.

This Bill was to ensure, as Gladstone claimed, "no separation," but "full maintenance of" the unity of the Empire, the authority of the Crown, and the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament. There was to be an elected Irish Parliament for all purely Irish legislation and administration, including finance, which was to be separated from British by an "equitable partition," which assigned to Ireland one-fifteenth of the National Debt. But non-partible affairs, chiefly the military and maritime organisations and the customs, were to remain under the Parliament of Great Britain, in which no Irish members were to sit. The Lord Lieutenant was to remain, as representing the Crown, but his subordinates would become a Ministry responsible to the Irish Parliament.

But it speedily became apparent that, if Gladstone was the first Prime Minister since Pitt to understand Irish feelings and principles, his grasp on those of Great Britain had somewhat slipped. Some of his most eminent colleagues—Hartington, Bright, Goschen, Chamberlain—immediately repudiated the scheme; Hartington, on the appearance of the newspaper revelation, having promptly issued a declaration of his own adherence to his previously announced principle—maintenance of the Union of Great Britain with Ireland. On the other hand, Gladstone was supported by Harcourt, Morley, Lord Rosebery and Campbell-Bannerman.

There was no room for neutrality; as soon as the Bill was brought in, every member was forced to range himself as Home-ruler or Unionist. The opponents of Home Rule could be classified in definite sections, both in Parliament and in the country: (A) The Irish minority, whom Gladstone himself had recently described as consisting of Ulster, all the Civil servants, all persons interested in land-owning, and all non-Roman-catholics. (B) Those who held the Union to be a fundamental part of the Constitution, like the Act of Settlement and the 1832 Reform Act. (C) Those in Great Britain who declared that to place the Irish minority at the mercy of the Irish majority was unjust, as well as those who instinctively resisted force and echoed the words of Forster—"A surrender is bad, but a compromise or arrangement is worse. . . . If all England cannot govern the member for Cork, then let us acknowledge that he is the greatest power in Ireland to-day. But I believe that with all England, helped by a large portion of Ireland, no concessions are necessary and that the Government should not be weakened by concessions." These had been Forster's words upon the Kilmainham business, and a vast number of Englishmen held with him the principle of *first* 'putting down rebellion,' *then* showing generosity. Only what in their eyes was generosity, seemed to the Parnellites a reluctant instalment of justice long overdue.

(D) There remained, besides, the objectors to particular features of Gladstone's scheme, of whom Chamberlain was the most forcible. He declared that he condemned it not because he felt it iniquitous in principle, as Bright did, but because it was ill adapted to accomplish its aim. It would neither preserve Union nor pacify the Irish. He severely criticised the Land Act which was to accompany it, whereby 120 millions were to be expended on buying out the landlords. Gladstone at once cut down the figure to 50 millions, but without satisfying Chamberlain.

Parnell, on the other hand, declared as decisively that the financial arrangements of the Home-rule Bill were crushingly unfair to Ireland, though Gladstone had calculated that they would provide a handsome surplus revenue for Ireland. The Irish party, Parnell intimated, accepted the Bill as an *instalment* of friendliness and justice: which seemed, indeed, to justify Chamberlain's criticism.

The most vehement opponents of the Bill were the first and third of the classes distinguished above. Bright, the veteran Radical, condemned the measure as unjust—protestant Ulster, and all the Protestants scattered over the rest of the island were being sacrificed to the Roman-catholic populace organised by Parnell.

A vigorous Ulster spokesman had already challenged the idea that mere numbers had any claim to obliterate quality and submerge a compact minority. The brains, the energy, the prosperity, manufactures, shipping and business of Ireland, he claimed, were all Protestant. Of this section the Tory democrat, Lord Randolph Churchill, aspired to be the leader. He was a young follower of Disraeli, too impatient to emulate the steady hard work of his master, but confident in his own oratory and talent for manipulating party voting. If he had not magically attained to that understanding of Irish character and interests acquired by the hard-working Secretaries, Hicks-Beach and Balfour, he at least provided Ulster with a catch-word: "Ulster will fight, Ulster will be right!" he said.

The Bill met its fate with unexpected promptitude. In vain the Prime Minister urged the House to allow it to pass the Second Reading, promising that if this much were conceded, so as to 'accept the principle,' he would then, instead of taking it into Committee of the whole House, to be debated and amended clause by clause, withdraw it entirely and introduce it anew in the autumn session for alteration and discussion. But the principle was just what the majority condemned, and modifications adapted to vote-catching just what they most feared. They therefore expressed their convictions directly, and on the Second Reading rejected the Bill, a summary proceeding very rare and on a Government measure almost unique, being the House's expression of absolute and almost contemptuous condemnation.

Gladstone told his Cabinet that they must either resign or dissolve Parliament; they agreed on the latter, in spite of the Queen's reluctance, and there followed the most tempestuous election since Reform days, the issue being clear and momentous and the passions of candidates and electors proportionately excited. Belfast, the great city where the two Irish factions so often clashed, was for two months in continual riot, culminating in open street fighting.

In Midlothian and the North of England the Prime Minister himself, though now an old man of seventy-seven, made a tour of election speeches, rousing frantic enthusiasm wherever he appeared.¹

But the emotion of crowds, as so often in this period, gave little indication of stable opinion and provided but a superficial reply to the grave remonstrances of Bright, to whom the Dissenters were content to commit their consciences, and of Hartington, on whose

¹ "Seven or eight hours of processional uproar and a speech of an hour and forty minutes to five or six thousand people . . ." is his own note at Liverpool; and his speeches were sometimes longer.

cool judgment and absolute integrity the intellectuals relied, while younger and more speculative politicians might reasonably suppose Chamberlain or Churchill more promising as leaders into office than the 'old man eloquent' with his one idea.¹ The Liberals who opposed Home Rule adopted the title of *Liberal Unionists* and recognised Hartington as leader. They and the Conservatives agreed to act together against what they both regarded as an unconstitutional proposal.

The results of this election showed a sweeping defeat for Gladstone, who resigned, and Salisbury formed a strong Conservative Cabinet (July 1886). The Liberal Unionists declined to hold any offices, hoping that there might possibly be a reconsolidation of the Liberal party if only Home Rule could be relinquished. But as it was not, they as a rule supported Salisbury, and held, in fact, the balance in the House, much as Disraeli's anti-Peelites had done in earlier days.

For a few months it seemed doubtful whether party considerations among the Conservatives might not supersede the Irish Question as the pivot of interest, though the grave importance of the public crisis in the end overcame sectional ambitions.

Lord Randolph Churchill, dissatisfied with being only Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House, aspired to become at once the real chief of the party. Naturally desiring to produce a popular budget of low taxes, he demanded that the estimates for the Navy and Army should be cut down below what the Ministers responsible considered necessary for national defence. Being refused, he resigned, expecting to bring the Cabinet to its knees, for it was understood that Gladstone was manœuvring to obtain both his support and Chamberlain's.

Salisbury, however, applied to the Liberal Unionists, and Hartington's colleague, the sagacious Goschen, stepped into the Exchequer, while W. H. Smith (whose Army estimates had been in question) undertook to lead the House on lines, if less dramatic than those of the past two decades, quite as efficient.

Goschen proved a very able financier and enjoyed the same good fortune as formerly Gladstone had in a season of 'booming' trade which ripened benevolent budgets.²

The new Cabinet was anxious to get to work upon legislation for Great Britain, and endeavoured to provide for Ireland by administering the Ashbourne Act and maintaining order. The successive Chief Secretaries were Hicks-Beach and Balfour. Salisbury, always a caustic orator, had once drawn on himself obloquy from the Home-rule benches by declaring that what Ireland needed was twenty years of strict government on the Conservative principles

¹ "Gladstone possesses no ideas," said the acrid Lowe; "his ideas possess him."

² There was a favourite story that when Churchill discovered the failure of his trick he exclaimed, "I forgot Goschen!"

of law and order before she could be fit for the gift of self-government and the expenditure of millions of money.

There could be no surprise that Parnell should immediately operate against the Conservative policy.

In the House he introduced a Bill of his own for reducing the Irish tenants' rents and rent arrears by one-half, a proposal decisively rejected. In Ireland the newspaper of his party, *United Ireland*, recommended a scheme known as the "Plan of Campaign," whereby aggrieved tenants might help themselves. Let the tenants on an estate agree together on the proportion of rent which they thought *fair*, offer this to the landlord as full payment, and if he refused to accept it, pay it into a fund, which would provide support for any tenant evicted and also furnish resources for the Nationalist League. The League had already been proclaimed to be an illegal association, and therefore to belong to it was criminal. Now the *Plan of Campaign* was similarly *proclaimed*, for the landlords met their tenants' tactics by evicting them, and the evictions were first resisted and then revenged. Throughout the winter of 1886-7 in Ireland all manner of misery was to be witnessed and all manner of violence was perpetrated.

The Ashbourne Act, already mentioned, produced a pacifying effect after a year or two. The Crimes Act (which conferred on the Lord Lieutenant stronger prerogative powers) was, moreover, made permanent.

In the House of Commons the persistent obstruction of legislation by the Parnellite party produced the first mild attempt to limit loquacity by a measure permitting the Speaker to declare the *closure* of debate and put a clause at once to the vote. But the contest between Parnell and general Conservative sentiment was soon transferred to a more dramatic setting.

The Times, steadily supporting ministers, published in 1887 a series of articles entitled *Parnellism and Crime*, designed to show that the Irish leader and his party were revolutionaries and had themselves helped to instigate recent Irish crimes. Part of the evidence offered was a facsimile letter, bearing Parnell's signature. This created immense sensation. But the only notice Parnell took of it was to state in the House that the letter was not his, but a forgery.

The usual course in such a case would have been to bring an action for libel against the newspaper, and when this course was pursued by an unnoticeable Irish ex-member, on his own behoof, but not by Parnell, people supposed there was some ground for the charges and strictures which were being levelled at him.

Parnell requested the appointment of a Select Committee of the House of Commons to inquire whether the alleged letter was a forgery. The Government refused to expend the time of the House in this fashion, but offered to appoint a Special Commission of three eminent judges to investigate the whole of the charges

made by *The Times*, which was rather more than Parnell had bargained for. The 'Parnell Commission,' as it was termed, sat for a year and a half. Virtually it was equivalent to a trial of Parnell and his sixty-five followers for instigating rebellion and murder.

His brilliant counsel for the defence, Sir Charles Russell, focussed attention upon the so-called facsimile letter and by his cross-questioning of the man, Pigot, who had purveyed it to *The Times*, made it perfectly clear that he had forged it.

In the end the three judges delivered a report which on the whole affirmed the general justice of the charges in *The Times*, but exculpated Parnell himself from the worst charges. The proof that *The Times* had been gulled by a forgery damaged its credit almost as gravely as the enormous costs damaged its finances. With characteristic effrontery Parnell was hailed by the Home-rulers as a maligned and blameless hero.

But "there is no gambling like politics" (as Disraeli once observed), and in a few months the triumphant Home-rule champion was suddenly crushed by a sordid private lawsuit. His private political agent, O'Shea, a man of low personal character, had turned against him, bringing an action for divorce, with Parnell as co-respondent, which exhibited his late master in a most discreditable light.

In British opinion Parnell was indelibly disgraced, and Gladstone informed him that the Liberal Home-rulers could no longer work with him as a political colleague. But Parnell refused to resign the headship of the Irish party, which split, the larger section holding to Gladstone and electing McCarthy as their leader, the smaller holding to Parnell and his lieutenant Redmond. Worst of all for Parnell, the priesthood in Ireland repudiated him, and after a few months of passionate demagoguery, vainly endeavouring to recapture power, he died (August 1891).

In the meantime the Irish question did not, during the Conservative Ministry, occupy the foremost place.

But when the General Election of 1892 returned once more a Gladstonian majority, the veteran Prime Minister promptly introduced a second Home-rule Bill. He was now a crusader in this cause, strongly supported by the moral philosopher, Morley, and the purely political Harcourt, less zealously by some others of his Cabinet. He was by no means helped by Redmond's frank announcement that the former Parnellites accepted the Bill as "only an instalment," because it still reserved to the Imperial Parliament the control of the navy and army, commerce and the customs, and foreign policy. On the other hand, a new feature of this second Home-rule Bill, the retention of eighty Irish members at Westminster to give Ireland's voice on "imperial legislation," certainly dismayed a larger number of practical men than it conciliated among the theorists; the House would still remain at their mercy.

This time the Home-rule Bill passed the Commons, by the *closure* being applied to clause after clause when the House was in committee. Intense excitement prevailed, and on the last night of the four months' debate a scene broke out such as had never occurred in the House since 1629.

By contrast, the unanimity of the House of Lords on the question was even more sweeping than had been anticipated. It fell to the 8th Duke of Devonshire (formerly Hartington) to move the rejection of the Bill, and he carried his motion by 419 to 41.

The House of Lords was well aware that in England itself there was a strong balance of opinion against Home Rule and therefore (as the elections had shown) against Gladstone. In "the Celtic fringes" of Scotland and Wales he had secured considerable support, but his majority in the House of Commons was wholly due to the Irish Home-rule members.

Whether or no the Home-rule Bill recognised a real racial cleavage, or perhaps only a temporary enthusiasm stirred up in Great Britain by the brilliant advocacy of one extraordinary man, there could be no doubt on which side the Upper House would range itself. And its decision against the Bill was accepted with a general equanimity in England, where it was supposed that the question was now disposed of, at any rate for a long period.

XIII

THE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT (1865 TO 1901)

(A) THE TENDENCY

POLITICALLY and socially the broad characteristic of the second half of the Victorian period, with which, in this respect, should be included that of Edward VII, is the general advance towards a democratic system. The altered meaning of the word itself is significant, for while in the 'thirties and 'forties it is still used in the old sense of mob-rule as opposed to aristocratic rule, and implied, therefore, a conflict between classes, it came in the 'seventies and 'eighties to be used (in England) rather in the sense of the average whole of the population, as distinguished from any section claiming special privileges, and nearly lost the implication of conflict between classes, except with politicians whose aim was to stir up such a conflict.

The difference between the English and the continental meanings of such terms as *democratic*, *liberal*, *radical*, *socialist*, if temporarily puzzling is typical of the agelong difference in history and sentiment.

The causes of this steady popular development were not purely political, though each political step hastened the movement socially, and this again reacted upon politics.

The agitation among the working classes to obtain the political franchise was incessant after 1832, and coincided with the growth of a fresh school of thought among the educated middle classes. These had been placed in the seat of political power by the 1832 Reform; but of all sections of the nation they were the most influenced by abstract ideas, and the most generous towards other classes. They perceived the discrepancy between philosophical assertions of individual liberty and the actual conditions of misery among working men, and they adopted a new theory known as *Collectivism*, for procuring the "greatest happiness of the greatest number" which they agreed should be the aim of government.¹

Compelled by Shaftesbury to recognise the actual conditions of industrial life, they assented to a system of governmental interference with the conduct of industry; a line of action which took,

¹ The Benthamite definition of 'happiness' was careful: "that combination of an honest and industrious life with the enjoyment of modest wealth and material comfort which is felt to be an object of desire by an ordinary Englishman."

not individual good, but *Collective* good as its ideal. Once adopted, this aim implied a right to interfere with personal liberties and property.

This remarkable change in public opinion took some time to accomplish. It was powerful from the 'sixties onwards. Its earliest striking examples were the Acts procured by Shaftesbury, with such great difficulty, for the protection of the helpless workers in mills and mines.

Other strong influences in the same direction were :—

- (a) The freedom and prosperity of manufactures and commerce which provided ample employment and mitigated the extreme poverty seen in the 'thirties and 'forties.
- (b) The Reform Act of 1867-8, which admitted artisans to the franchise and made a fresh starting-point.
- (c) The reforms in the Law and the new system of Local Government, involving compulsion as to preservation of the general health.
- (d) The general extension of Education.

(A) The new *Free-trade* economics of Peel were bound to become under his followers the recognised basis of English commerce. Such duties as were retained were kept for the necessary purpose of obtaining a national revenue, a necessity sometimes forgotten by ardent advocates of the individual right to grow rich. The Aberdeen Government of course maintained Peel's policy and extended it. Duties were removed from goods which only travelled to our ports for the purpose of re-export to other countries, although Pitt had thence obtained a large revenue, and as a free port London was overflowing with trade. This, together with the abolition in 1849 of the last relics of the Navigation laws, gave an enormous stimulus to all shipping businesses.

Palmerston, the "Whig with a Conservative mind," was content to leave the finances in the charge of Gladstone, to whose skilful management was partly ascribed the continuance of prosperity during the 'sixties. His success and popularity made him the most notable of Palmerston's Cabinet and the obvious leader of that party after the veteran's death. For from his entry into Aberdeen's Cabinet Gladstone ranked as a Liberal.

Changes in taxation have often entailed alterations in manners, the abolition of the Corn Laws providing an outstanding instance. Smaller changes might also produce effects unforeseen and perhaps even undesired.

Gladstone abolished two duties already reduced in 1837, the paper duty and the stamp duties on newspapers, which he called "taxes on knowledge"; this resulted in the wonderful cheapness of newspapers and the addition of the whole population to reading them. Thence ensued fortunes for owners and publishers, a great extension of journalism and authorship as remunerative professions,

and the exercise by the Press of a more powerful influence upon opinion and votes than ever before.

So, too, Gladstone's decrease of the duties on tea and sugar ("a Free Breakfast Table" he called it) resulted in a great increase in the consumption of them and a parallel decrease in the consumption of beer and spirits. But the effect of these and similar remissions was to increase the incomes of the population but to decrease that of the State.

The Conservative acceptance of Free-trade was uncertain at first, many of the country members not seeing why it might not be repealed. Even Stanley (14th Earl of Derby) toyed with this idea, but Disraeli prevented any such attempt. However little they liked the new departure, he held it to be irrevocable, like the Abolition of Slavery or of Roman-catholic disabilities, and he perceived that the attempt and not the deed would confound any Ministry: "Protection is not only dead, but damned," he told them. In fact Stanley's refusal ever to state plainly his acceptance of Free-trade was the cause of the increased Liberal majorities.

Throughout the latter part of the Victorian age not only did social conditions act powerfully on political changes, but religious and philanthropic thought largely influenced conduct. Such a Society as *The Charity Organisation Society* gave the double impulse of corporate sympathy and effort, and of the combination of science and knowledge with enthusiasm.

(B) THE FRANCHISE

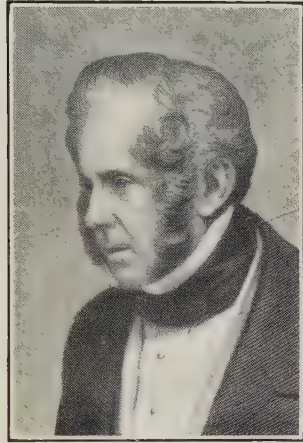
It was the Reform Bill of 1867 which gave the franchise to large numbers of artisans. The achievement was due almost equally to the two great rivals, Disraeli and Gladstone; the former carried the Act through Parliament, the latter had made it inevitable by campaigns of public speeches which revealed to the multitude its own strength.

A parliamentary reform measure had become almost the 'stock-in-trade' panacea of the Whigs so long as John Russell still led their dwindling ranks. His attempts, however, had withered in the general lack of interest (1853, '60, '66), and he himself took care to kill the Conservative Bill of 1859.

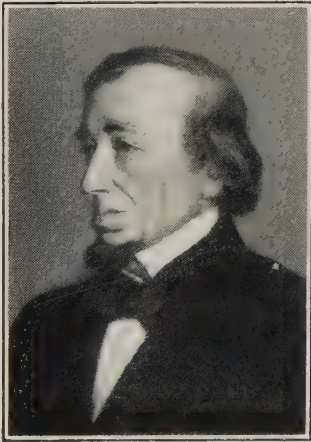
His latest effort, after he had accepted a peerage, was championed in the Commons by his colleague, Gladstone. Gladstone had by this time left far behind his 'Peelite' (or Free-trade Conservative) stage, and in the capacity of Liberal leader had become a convert to the radicalism of Bright. He now asserted that "Every man who is not presumably incapacitated by some consideration of personal unfitness or of political danger is morally entitled to come within the pale of the constitution" (*i.e.* to have a vote). "Tom Paine!" ejaculated Disraeli, who maintained that the possession of a vote is not a 'moral right,' but a privilege to be earned. The



W. E. GLADSTONE.



VISCOUNT PALMERSTON



LORD BEACONSFIELD.



JOHN RUSKIN.

facing p. 108.

House remained little moved; what the fervour of Gladstone and Bright did accomplish was to stir up a popular interest in extension of the franchise which revealed itself in noisy meetings, especially in the cities of the Midlands and the North, and in London.

As there was no open place of assembly in London, the leaders of the 'Reform League' announced a demonstration in Hyde Park. The Parks were Crown property, though they had lain open to public access from olden times. The Home Secretary, fearing a riot, ordered the gates to be closed, with the result that an angry crowd—without the slightest intention of menacing royalty—broke down some of the railings and attacked the police.

This breaking of the Park railings was the equivalent in London of a riot in Berlin or revolution in Paris. But a perfectly orderly meeting was being conducted at the same time in Trafalgar Square, and the Lord Mayor himself, head and symbol of law and order in London, endorsed the demand of the working men for "residential manhood suffrage" and voting by ballot at elections.

There was, therefore, little choice for the Conservative Government of 1867 but to introduce a Reform Bill of its own. What mattered, the Queen said, was that the steps taken should suffice to settle the question for a long time. This Disraeli endeavoured to do by adopting some of the former proposals of Russell, Gladstone and Bright. This, of course, provoked discontent among sundry Conservatives, particularly Lord Cranborne (afterwards Salisbury), who, unable to take their leader's long views, fancied him to be playing fast-and-loose with principles and into Liberal hands.

The Act as carried in 1868 largely extended the franchise, not to the Radical goal of a vote for every man, but on the principle of votes for householders, men who could be considered as having "a stake in the country," to use the old phrase. The distribution of members was altered in such a way as to give more members to large towns and to counties at the expense of smaller towns. Only towns of at least 10,000 inhabitants were to retain two members, and twenty-five additional county members were assigned.

The original proposal of Disraeli was to give the vote in towns to every householder *who paid rates*. This was eventually extended to a general admission of all householders, as well as lodgers paying as much as £10 for an unfurnished lodging. The county franchise was given to occupiers paying a rent of not less than £12, which included the small shopkeepers and farmers but excluded the labourer. A third member was assigned to Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester and one to the University of London. In the four great towns and the City of London the plan of 'proportional' (or 'minority') representation was tried, voters being allowed to vote only for two out of three candidates, so that the minority in the constituency might be able to get one member elected.

Disraeli had intended to confer a larger voting power to the educated by bestowing a second vote on men who had obtained a University degree or had saved a certain sum in a Savings Bank. "Fancy franchises!" scoffed Bright, "one man one vote!" and the gibe disposed of what many considered as a reasonable precaution against the tyranny of ignorant numbers. "Votes should be weighed as well as counted," they said. A proposal by J. S. Mill to confer the franchise on qualified women was set aside by the House "with the mild jocularly which became a tradition with the House of Commons whenever the question came up for discussion in Parliament during the remainder of the nineteenth century."

To secure the passing of his Bill—"The Bill, or at any rate a Bill"—Disraeli accepted some drastic Liberal amendments: "The principles of Bright at the dictation of Gladstone," sneered Cranborne, who forthwith resigned.¹ The Prime Minister's patience in the end triumphed. His Act endured unaltered till 1884; his avowed principle that the voter should earn the franchise by earning a home in which he contributed to the public revenue (whether directly or through a landlord) became a generally accepted principle until 1918.

The many famous sayings on this much-debated measure were spoken by others than its sponsor. It was Derby, never able to resist an epigram, who put off a party bore with—"Well, don't you see, we have *dished the Whigs*": and who cheerfully acknowledged to the House of Lords, "We are taking a leap in the dark." It was Lowe who commented, "We must now educate our new masters."

The General Election which followed was aptly described by the epigram: "Disraeli enfranchised the working man and he replied, 'Thank you, Mr. Gladstone.'"

The frank recognition of Democracy, in the sense of a comprehensive or 'socialist' or 'collectivist' plan of legislation and politics, was first made by Tory leaders, and after its successful inception acclaimed and adopted by Liberal leaders, but that it was no essential part of either Tory or Liberal creed may be seen from the indignant speeches of members as eminent as Shaftesbury on the Tory side and Bright on the other. Shaftesbury stoutly denied any socialist tendency in his Factory Acts, while Bright persistently opposed all those Acts precisely because he saw in them the beginnings of socialist (or collectivist) legislation; both orators denounced strikes, and the workmen's political adviser, Francis Place, opposed Trade-unions. Bright was the acknowledged spokesman of the *Radicals*, a political section which relied on political action alone, and desired to see parliamentary privileges distributed to all Englishmen equally, and all other kinds of privilege abolished—no Church, or Peerage, or property qualification. "Every man

¹ "In the year of the great crime" wrote a contemporary poet, Coventry Patmore.

to count for one and no man for more than one," that is, manhood suffrage, with no favour for education, wealth or family. If this could be attained, the votes of the majority would automatically determine legislation and policy. But until this was attained, Bright's Radicals did not wish to see what they termed "interference with individual liberty," meaning legislation for the benefit of weaker sections of the population. Apparently they cherished a veneration for capital so long as it was not visible in land, and ascribed saving merits to unlimited competition.¹

But the democratic theory in which Disraeli sought to educate the Conservative party was a theory rather social than political. To a sneer that the working man could never be a Conservative, "because he had nothing to conserve . . . neither land nor capital," Disraeli could indignantly reply: "There are things in my opinion even more precious than land and capital, and without which land and capital themselves would be of little worth. What, for instance, is land without liberty? And what is capital without justice?"² The working classes of this country have inherited personal rights which the nobility of other nations do not yet possess. Their persons or their homes are sacred. They have no fear of arbitrary arrests or domiciliary visits. They know that the administration of law in this country is pure, and that it is no respecter of individuals or classes. They know very well that their industry is unfettered, and that by the law of this country they may combine to protect the interests of labour; and they know that though it is open to all of them to serve their Sovereign by land or sea, no one can be dragged from his craft or his hearth to enter a military service which is repugnant to him. Surely these are privileges worthy of being preserved!"

It was a young follower of Disraeli, Lord Randolph Churchill, who tried to organise a *Tory Democracy* as a distinct political creed and party. The political regulations of 1868 were further modernised by the Gladstone Ministries. In 1872 the *Ballot Act* at last authorised a practice which had been long demanded by democratic reformers but always rejected by both parties. The respectable were, till 1872, convinced that secret voting would somehow undermine loyalty and patriotism.

In 1883 an Act against *Corrupt Practices* set narrow limits to the expenditure lawful in parliamentary elections, so that bribery in its versatile disguises became too dangerous to attempt. It is stated that the election of 1880 had cost altogether 2½ millions, while the next election totalled £800,000.

In 1884 the franchise was extended to about two million fresh voters, principally in England. The county franchise, which had previously been based on land-holding, was assimilated to that in boroughs and the vote conferred on all, including lodgers, who paid

¹ As satirised by the contemporary poet, A. H. Clough.

² As the medieval merchant and villein would feelingly have testified.

a rent of 'rateable value' not less than £10. For the first time the agricultural labourer entered the electorate.

Subsequent alterations in the level of property qualifications or distribution of members are of no great importance until the long agitation of women to obtain the franchise, after an intermission of four years during the World War, was terminated by the Representation of the People Act, 1918, which abolished the old qualifications, extended the franchise very widely, and included women as citizens according to certain qualifications of age and property.

(C) LAW AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

" The land, where girt with friends or foes
A man may speak the thing he will;
A land of settled government,
A land of just and old renown,
Where Freedom slowly broadens down
From precedent to precedent : " . . . ¹

Whatever criticisms may be levelled at the great Victorian poet's description of England, it is at all events the most pithy summary of her constitutional history yet framed. But in the nineteenth century that leisurely process was accelerated by sweeping reforms which together amounted to a virtual revolution, a transference of privilege and authority to the generality.

The measures which democratised the House of Commons are so well known as to overshadow the no less remarkable popularising of Local Government and the reform of the administration of justice, although these are the branches of Government which most nearly touch the actual life of the people.

When the ideal of the individual and his absolute liberty waned before the collectivist ideal of the social good, a corollary became attached to the theory of equal competition that some kind of protection was due to weaker individuals. Thence arose a variety of legal provisions, and in the public mind the majestic theory of the Law as the universal protector took shape and came to exist with perfect ease beside the older theory of the Law as the guardian of order. It is now as usual in a London police-court as it is said to be in Indian courts for an oppressed individual to apply to the magistrate for protection or advice.

But the technical difficulty and complexity of our Law system necessarily still prevent it from being exactly understood except by the experts who work it, so that most of us are unaware of the debt of gratitude due to a number of eminent judges and chancellors who spent years of labour in so reconstructing the machinery of the Law and its Courts as to enable the general public to have readier recourse to it and feel confidence in its justice.

This was accomplished by a series of Statutes passed during the

¹ Tennyson, " You ask me why."

second half of the nineteenth century which transformed the medieval and Tudor system to its modern shape. Throughout the whole must be remembered the legal distinction between *Criminal* and *Civil* law.

In the sphere of *Criminal Law* (where prosecution is conducted in the name of the Crown for the sake of the community) the essential features of the historical system, so far as relates to the constitution of the Courts, have undergone little change. The reform of the criminal law has consisted largely in the mitigation of its severity. Under the old code ferocious punishments could be, and often were, inflicted for quite minor offences: for example, petty thefts were punishable by death, as in Anglo-Saxon days. This savage system has been replaced by a humane code based on the theory that the aim of the criminal law is remedial. Formerly the theory had been that the aim of the law was to frighten potential criminals into harmlessness by exhibiting the terrible punishments inflicted on malefactors. There may have been also a vindictive temper of taking revenge, but this was more often ascribed to lawyers and judges than really entertained by them. The modern idea of reforming the criminal is at all events praiseworthy.

The "primary" criminal courts, now called *Courts of Summary Jurisdiction*, are composed of the Justices of the Peace, and date back to the thirteenth century. These unpaid country gentlemen, who form in each county the Commission of the Peace, used to discharge numerous duties of administration, such as fixing rates of wages and prices of bread, licensing hawkers, public-houses, vendors of tea, tobacco, or other excised articles, regulating repair and tolls of highways and bridges, and county administration generally. Some of these functions are now obsolete, while the more important matters of county administration have been transferred to County Councils, under the Local Government Act, 1888. The principal item of civil business remaining in the hands of the justices is the licensing of public-houses. The judicial functions of the justices are mostly performed at courts of Petty Sessions, where cases of minor importance are tried by two or more justices with the assistance of a lawyer or trained clerk.

In some of the larger towns a Stipendiary Magistrate who is a trained lawyer takes the place of the justices in the courts of Petty Sessions, while in London the Metropolitan Police Magistrates hold the courts of Summary Jurisdiction.

Formerly a Justice of the Peace was required to possess a property qualification, but this was abolished in 1906, and women are now eligible to serve as justices, so that the Commission of the Peace is now drawn from all classes of the community and represents in a more democratic manner than in any other country the national character of the primary courts of law.

When the offence charged is of too serious a character to be dealt

with summarily, the accused person can be committed to *Quarter Sessions* or to the *Assizes* for trial by a jury.

The courts of Quarter Sessions are of ancient origin, and are held in the larger boroughs, and in every county. In the boroughs the court is usually held by the Recorder, who is a lawyer. In the counties the court consists of the Justices of the Peace, of whom the Chairman frequently possesses legal qualifications.

Offences of the gravest kind, such as murder, cannot be tried at Quarter Sessions and are sent to the *Assizes*, which are usually held in the principal county town. The Assizes are also of very ancient institution. Just as the Plantagenet kings sent their Judges on tour through the country, so now Judges of the High Court, or sometimes an eminent lawyer as Commissioner of Assize, go on circuit to hold the Assizes. Only in London the *Central Criminal Court* takes the place which Assizes occupy in the country.

In London also is established the *Court of Criminal Appeal*, to which, by a most important recent reform, appeals may be made against convictions made at Quarter Sessions or even at Assizes.

The *Civil Courts* (for suits between private individuals) were in the nineteenth century subjected to much more drastic alterations than were the Criminal Courts. Prior to the Judicature Act of 1875 a number of separate courts existed possessing independent jurisdiction. The famous courts of *Common Law* throughout our history, from Plantagenet times, have been the Court of King's Bench, the Court of Common Pleas, and the Court of Exchequer. In addition to these Common Law Courts, and independent of them, was the Court of Chancery under the Lord Chancellor. This court administered the law of real property (*i.e.* land), trusts and the devolution of estates. It worked on principles of its own, known as 'rules of equity,' distinct from the principles of Common Law. There were also courts which dealt with Matrimonial causes and the Probate of Wills (exercising the jurisdiction once possessed by the old Ecclesiastical Courts), besides an Admiralty Court for maritime cases.

This complicated system was swept away by the Judicature Act (1875), which constituted one Supreme Court of Judicature consisting of (1) the High Court of Justice—now organised in three divisions, named the King's Bench, Chancery, and Probate, Divorce and Admiralty divisions; and (2) the Court of Appeal, of which the members are the Masters of the Rolls and the Lords Justices of Appeal. Before them (or any three of them) come any *appeals* from decisions of the judges of the High Court. It is possible for even the judgments of the Court of Appeal to be re-considered (or "reviewed") by the *House of Lords*, which thus still retains its ancient jurisdiction as the ultimate Court of Appeal in all civil causes. When the House sits for this purpose the tribunal consists of eminent lawyers, the Lord Chancellor presides and ex-Lord Chancellors and other distinguished Law lords are his colleagues.

There is, however, a special Court of Appeal provided for appeals brought from law-courts of the British Dominions and Colonies and a few special courts held for British subjects in foreign countries. This is the *Judicial Committee of the Privy Council*, composed of Privy Councillors who have held high judicial office in Great Britain or the Empire. It forms also the appeal court for ecclesiastical causes.

Below the superior courts described above, many local courts are held having jurisdiction to try civil causes when only small claims are at stake. During the eighteenth century a large number of local courts (termed Courts of Requests) were set up, but were abolished in 1846, when Lord Chancellor Cottenham, a persevering reformer of the harsh laws affecting debtors, obtained the passing of an Act to establish County Courts.

The County Courts are grouped in fifty-two circuits, each of which has a judge or judges appointed by the Lord Chancellor. A County Court judge holds his court at various places in his circuit, and tries civil cases which are not of sufficient importance to necessitate the more expensive procedure of an action in the High Court.

It is interesting to note that the sweeping reforms in the national law system have not entailed an increase in the jury system. Serving on a jury has come to be regarded as a burden, while there is no suspicion that it might be needed as a safeguard against tyranny. It is, indeed, probable that the eloquence expended upon this topic during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was merely political. For the fairness of English judges and the purity of English law-courts have long been the model (and puzzle) of mankind.

Along with the reforms which can only be thus summarily outlined, but which involved an infinite re-arrangement of methods and persons, a host of rules, fines, fictions, officials, privileges, and prisons—long since obsolete in reason but tyrannically persisting—were abolished and replaced by moderate, humane, and sensible methods. Only the famous *mise-en-scène* of some of Dickens' novels perpetuates their memory and misery.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The reconstruction of LOCAL GOVERNMENT under Victoria at least equals in importance the reform of Parliament and the Law, and can only be compared with the achievements of Edward I. It made the most practical and important side of government popular in the true political sense. Representatives elected on a broad franchise are not only empowered but obliged to superintend all those parts of the Public Services which are capable of being dealt with locally. In fact, the same change of idea has operated as in the case of the Courts of Law; government and law having in earlier times become centralised, and having thus acquired strength

and system, are now again decentralised and distributed locally, to acquire promptitude and precision.

(a) Among the oldest units of local government in our history are the *boroughs*, and they still remain, as Municipal Boroughs, units of self-government. Apart from them the three modern divisions for Local Government are arranged for the County, the District, and the Parish.

(b) The District was first organised expressly for Sanitary purposes, as the *Urban Sanitary District* or *Rural Sanitary District*. Each borough forms an urban sanitary district.

In the middle of the century the disaster of famine and the terror of cholera drove Parliament to attend to the urgent warnings of several public-spirited doctors, particularly Southwood Smith, and a *Public Health Act* (1848) instituted a new Government department, the *Board of Public Health*, which endeavoured to create a system of control all over the country. The Board's powers and system were improved by successive Acts till, in 1875, Sanitary Districts were mapped out over the entire country. Town Councils are the authority for their respective boroughs and must do the same work.

The 'District Councils' (urban and rural) were constituted by the Local Government Act, 1894, and are composed of men and women residing in the area, who need not possess any qualification of property, but must serve at their own expense. They are elected for three years. They are obliged to provide for and manage : roads (other than main roads), drains and sewers, a public supply of water, and are responsible for the sanitary condition of houses, inspection of food, slaughter-houses, etc., and some other responsibilities have been placed upon them or opened to them unconnected with health.

Previous to 1875, additions to local government had been made by setting up fresh Boards, Commissioners, etc., for each new subject of legislation. This had the bad result of creating a variety of authorities and districts often overlapping, and much confusion by the number of officials, elections and rates.

Now the Councils of Boroughs or Urban or Rural Districts have in practice superseded the old Highway Boards and Sewage Commissions, and share in the work of the Guardians of the Poor.

The simplification has been attended by largely increased efficiency, because the duties of the Councils oblige them to employ the services of a number of salaried experts (surveyors, inspectors, etc.) who direct the Council's management of all manner of public works, providing for supplies of water, gas or roads. The revenue for these expenses comes out of the fees and rents paid by householders for their share of the water and other services, from certain fines allotted in law courts, and finally from a *rate* which the Council levies.

Apart from the District stands the organisation of the County. As it now exists the County combines relics of ancient custom

with modern practical methods. From the Middle Ages the *Sheriff* survives, and he still must be a person possessing "sufficient land to answer the Queen and her people" (Sheriffs Act, 1887), that is, rich enough in landed property to pay any fine or indemnity for which he may have made himself liable by committing some mistake. For though he has deputies he is legally responsible for their proceedings, just as he remains responsible for the personal safety of the King's judges if they come into a circuit in his county. He is still lawfully able to arrest on his own authority a person suspected of serious crime and is entitled to call on any of the people in his county to help him in doing so. If they disobey, they are punishable. Most of the Sheriff's duties are in peaceful times simply formal, but his important position as a direct royal agent is still recognised by the Sovereign, who personally *pricks* a name for each Shire on a list prepared by certain learned judges (relics of the Plantagenet Court of Exchequer), and he must serve at his own expense and cannot decline the position without paying a very heavy fine.

Dignified as the Sheriff's office is, he is something far greater than a Plantagenet relic or a mere figure-head, he is a great Crown officer in reserve. If some unexpected emergency should arrive, the High Sheriff would stand in every county legally possessed of authority to execute what Bacon would have called the *prerogative* power of the Crown.

The other County magnate who survives from olden time is the Lord Lieutenant, whose origin, however, under Queen Mary I, seems almost modern compared with the misty Saxon antiquity of the Sheriff.

Lieutenants were first appointed by the Crown as military officers, to control, in each county, the county troops or militia. Hard-worked sometimes under Elizabeth, they and their deputies became objects of parliamentary suspicion in the seventeenth century, but recovered their lofty authority in the eighteenth for so long as the militia continued to be the true security against insurrection. "More ornamental than important" they could be termed at the close of the Victorian period, when many politicians clamoured for the abolition of anything not utilitarian, and they narrowly escaped being abolished. But the reforms of the succeeding reign, by reconstituting a *Territorial* force, rediscovered the functions of Lord Lieutenants and deputy-Lieutenants, who in 1914 took up the identical rôle of their remote exemplars of Armada year. The Lieutenant and Sheriff, then, though they may appear to be of value chiefly in formal proceedings, should rather be regarded as emergency officials in reserve.

The regular work of county administration is carried on by the COUNTY COUNCILS, set up by the Local Government Act of 1888. Each 'administrative county' (there are sixty-one in all) is obliged to elect a Council, and the Council is obliged to transact all

business necessary for the efficient management of—main roads; education (elementary, secondary, technical, and reformatory); river pollution and some other sanitary precautions; licences for motor cars and some other undertakings (but not for sale of liquor); measures relating to birds and beasts; registrations, assessments, and several other functions which were previously performed by the Justices of the Peace. But those great towns which are important enough to have been created *county boroughs* have their own county borough councils and conduct all this administration for themselves as well as the urban sanitary duties.

The financial responsibilities laid on the County Councils are heavy. They receive for particular purposes a grant from the national exchequer which by no means covers the cost of their multifarious business. The rest they must collect from the inhabitants by the customary method of a *rate*. Therefore, in several departments (*e.g.* secondary education), the better the administration, the heavier the local taxation, which is sometimes found to be a severe deterrent to enterprise.

The last and smallest and oldest of the units of modern Local Government is the parish, and in the *Parish Councils* created for rural parishes by the Act of 1894 the historian may perceive the resurrection of the Anglo-Saxon “men of the Township,” of the “priest, the reeve, and four lawful men,” who once upon a time could, and must, “answer for the Township” to Saxon and Plantagenet judges.

For centuries the parish (ecclesiastical) and the township (civil) have been identical in extent. As with the old-fashioned ‘Church and State,’ the same persons were concerned and virtually the same places. But in modern organisation this was found inconvenient and the historical anomaly of *two* parishes was invented, the ‘ecclesiastical’ (or old) and the ‘civil,’ or new administrative unit, which need not coincide. It is the latter which assembles its Parish Council endowed with but limited powers and very little power of raising any revenue.

To the Parish Councils were transferred several non-ecclesiastical duties, which were formerly laid on churchwardens, overseers, or vestries. They have the management of village charities, and of recreation grounds, fire-engines, public footpaths and allotments. One very important function of the parish in former times, however, has now been taken away from it. The *Constable* is no longer merely a parish officer nor chosen by it. He is there, but as a member of a large and honourable body, the police constables of the city or county.

The success of Peel’s civil policemen in Ireland and in London produced at long last an extension of the system over the whole country. At first (1839) counties were permitted to enlist a police force: next, the *County and Borough Police Act* (1856) ordered each borough and county to put in force the general scheme. The cost

is divided between the Local Authority and the Exchequer, and outside of the boroughs the management is in the hands of a Joint Committee of the County Council and the Justices in Quarter Sessions.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ORGANISATION OF A BOROUGH

"The record of the work of a single day. . . .

" . . . As the day breaks, and the town awakens, the waterworks come into full activity. The water, collected over two hundred miles of area, and stored in vast reservoirs . . . is made to circulate throughout the district. It is guarded with jealous care as to its purity. . . . Engines, equal in power to nearly a thousand horses, pump it a height of 250 feet, through 400 miles of pipes. . . . Thus, from the wealthiest to the poorest, the people of the town are provided with the first necessary of health. . . .

"Next in the municipal economy of the town must be placed the vast system of sewers, nearly 200 miles in total length . . . down to the sewers' outlet, where, by the resources of modern science, it is purified and rendered, not harmless merely, but beneficial . . . through the soil of the sewage farm.

" . . . Other agencies in the preservation of health come into play. A little army of scavengers issues from the wharves and yards of the Public Works Department, to cleanse the streets from dirt and refuse, to water them, to repair the roadways and footpaths. . . . Side by side with these diligent workers the staff of the Health Department begin their task . . . the inspectors of nuisances, who visit the courts and houses, cleanse and repair the drains, search out causes and cases of infectious diseases, remove patients requiring isolation, whitewash foul dwellings, examine suspected walls, watch the smoky factory chimneys, and report to their chief, the Medical Officer, all that is likely to affect the health of the population.

" . . . But the food supply of the community has also to be looked to. Here the markets take their turn. From daybreak to midday they are scenes of busy life. Trains arrive from all parts bringing in daily supplies of meat, and fish, and milk, and vegetables. Endless lines of wagons and carts, laden with field and garden produce, roll through the streets to the Bull Ring and Smithfield. . . .

"Then, for the maintenance of order and the protection of honest people, the 500 constables enter upon their daily rounds, the firemen stand ready at their watch, and the courts of police and law begin to sit. The children, too, are going to school, over 50,000 of them in the total. . . . The parks, the gardens, and the baths offer means of pleasant recreation. . . . For intellectual culture the news rooms and libraries, within easy reach of all quarters of the town, are open free to all comers, crowned by the great Reference Library, with its 70,000 volumes, and allied with the Gallery of Art. . . .

"As night draws on, the round of work is completed by nearly 2,000 sturdy toilers, whose regular labour ensures our gas supply, and the burgesses have the satisfaction of knowing that they are making profit by the lights which gleam along the 200 miles of streets and roads, and illuminate the tens of thousands of factories, and shops and dwellings.

"So, day by day, year out, year in, the vast machinery of local administration, as we have it in our town, works steadily and silently on . . . regulated with all the strictness of law, yet free with all the liberty of self-control; the finished product of patient inquiry, and long experience, and wise legislation . . . open to the whole community from richest to poorest, in full measure, and of equal right."

(From *History of the Corporation of Birmingham*, by John Thackray Bunce. *Introduction to Vol. II. pp. xii-xiv*, written in 1884.)

(D) NEW METHODS IN ADMINISTRATION

Another and very important step in the advance of popular government was the opening not only of Parliament, but of posts in the active departments of Government to a larger part of the public. The most sweeping change was that of 1870, when Lowe and Gladstone succeeded in replacing patronage by open competition as the method whereby the great number of minor appointments in Government departments should henceforth be decided.

These *departments* had acquired increasing importance in proportion to the increasing numbers, loquacity and slowness of the House of Commons.

Parliament, the supreme legislative authority of the realm, has never administered its own laws or its own policy, but leaves the former task to the judicial authorities and the latter to the ministers, each of whom undertakes an office and controls a department for which he is responsible to Parliament. As, however, his time is spent in Parliament or at Cabinet meetings he is obliged to leave nearly all the actual work of his office to non-politicians who are regularly engaged upon it. They are all embraced by the term *Civil Service*, and are permanent officials who do not go out of office with the Cabinet. Until 1870 the chiefs of each office had named their subordinates, a system which necessarily confined appointments to a narrow circle however careful the chief might be to look for talent.

Patronage, however, had sometimes failed to find talent, or had even nominated incompetence, so that an examination had been imposed on the nominees by Palmerston's Government (1855, 1860) to ascertain if they reached a standard of fitness.

In 1870 appointment by patronage was abolished (except for the Foreign Office, which did not fall into line with the other offices till rather later).

The most responsible members of the Civil Service, though their names may be unknown to newspapers, are often of more importance than their political chiefs. In the Foreign Office, the Home Office or the Treasury the permanent officials possess the records and traditions of many years: theirs is the wisdom of experience. But it is of the first importance that they should possess also discretion, honour and a strong sense of public duty. There are, therefore, some grave difficulties in the operation of automatic rules of appointment, promotion or retirement, while the huge increase in the personnel of many departments may reduce the responsibility of the political chief to a formality.

There was a greater difficulty in modernising the appointment of officers in the army.

The alteration in the mode of conferring commissions, which was achieved about the same time, was not political in intention, but a

part of the large reforms in the army system carried out by Cardwell. Commissions in the army had been in most cases purchased from previous holders of the rank. This had long been the system, in logical imitation of eighteenth-century political custom. The prices of steps in rank were from time to time regulated by royal warrant, but an additional sum was privately paid to the officer who undertook to vacate his place in a particular regiment for the benefit of the purchaser. Any officer who wished to retire could sell his place, and in 1870 nearly every officer in the army had obtained his position in this way, and looked forward to recouping himself by selling it again. There was, therefore, considerable opposition to the proposal to abolish purchase, especially in the House of Lords, where all the military peers condemned the proposal.

The aspect of the affair which has excited most attention, however, is a curious constitutional issue due to Gladstone's hurry. The Commons having passed the Bill the Lords rejected it, a proceeding which normally would defer the measure till a fresh House of Commons should again pass such a Bill, after which step the Lords would in all likelihood pass it. Such was the habitual course.

But Gladstone, intent upon getting the reform at once, asked the Queen to abolish purchase in the army by a Royal Warrant. This expedient was perfectly legal, but so unusual as to be regarded by Conservatives as unconstitutional, since it had the effect of making the minister independent of Parliament. Gravely as the Prime Minister's proceeding was blamed in the Houses, little importance was attached to his action outside them.

The occasion is interesting as an example of the mild aspect in which a modern age may regard proceedings which would in earlier times have been labelled despotic; it resembled very closely certain actions of Buckingham and Strafford. But when the reality of power and responsibility was known by all to reside in a Cabinet, details of method stirred little excitement.

This affair of the Royal Warrant, together with two instances of high-handedness in conferring appointments, helped to spread among a portion of the reading public a distrust of Gladstone's straightforwardness. It was considered that he was bent upon getting his own way by any method.

A more striking instance of the obscurity which has overtaken ancient bogies may be discovered in the Income Tax, one of the sheet-anchors of the national revenue, and of course to be included with all other taxes in the flattering fiction that British taxation is under the control of the taxpayers. They have indeed voted for the party which is led by the Prime Minister who has appointed the Chancellor of the Exchequer who has fixed the proportion of their income which citizens must pay over to the State. But a large part of the incomes are "taxed at the source"—paid over to the agents for the Exchequer by the cashiers of the companies,

banks, etc. which are to distribute to shareholders or clients the dividends or interest that is due to them. These payments are handed over automatically whether or no the *Budget* has yet been voted. They would be recognised by the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries as arbitrary taxation.

Almost as arbitrary would our ancestors consider the other sheet-anchor of our public finance—the county or borough *Rate*. The electors vote for the councillors who decide the figures of the rate, but the councillors are obliged, by the order of a Government department, to provide funds enough for all the works which they are bound to carry on, and ratepayers who do not pay up are distrained upon. It resembles nothing so much as the *monthly assessments* of civil war times, which were ordered by the ‘Rump’ Parliament and collected by protesting local officials with Cromwell’s soldiers behind them.

THE INCOME TAX

The modern form of Income Tax was imposed by Pitt, in 1803, when the second, or Napoleonic, period of the French war began. Not the principle, but the mode of collection was new. The principle of payment according to income is as old as subsidies, but Pitt’s invention of collecting it *at the source*, from the banks, before it had reached the owner’s hands, possessed an advantage over the old mode of dunning a man at his house. It diminished both the costs of collecting and the opportunities of cheating in such a degree that double the quantity of revenue flowed into the Exchequer: 5 per cent. collected in this way produced as much as 10 per cent. before.

It could, of course, only have been enforced in a stable society, accustomed to dividends, banking and keeping accounts. It proved that London was the actual financial centre of the kingdom, that numbers of persons possessed an assured income, and that honesty and exactitude could be reckoned upon in bankers’ accounts.

This collection at the source meant that income was taxed before received, and although now overcharges are repaid upon application, so that in the end fair justice is achieved, the State has in the meantime had the use of the money and is always a year ahead, the total forming, in fact, a huge *forced loan*. But between Pitt and Hampden lay nearly two centuries during which England had come to acquiesce in national taxation.

Pitt imposed his Income Tax as an emergency war tax, and after Waterloo it was repealed by the Commons quite against the intentions of the ministers, who found loans necessary to cover the deficit thus forced upon them.

After the alterations of 1832 in the House of Commons, renewed zeal was directed towards repealing taxes. The economists urged that taxes upon many separate items strangle trade, while it was obvious that to remit taxes was the surest road to favour with the

new electorate. But the Melbourne Government possessed no financial talent, and though it persuaded an eminent banker, Baring, to become Chancellor of the Exchequer, his budget gave the final blow to the Whig Cabinet.

A "good man struggling with adversity," quoth Peel, very kindly, and the caricaturist of the day drew the poor man sitting "on an empty chest by the pool of bottomless deficiency, fishing for a budget." No wonder Melbourne was so ready to hand over his responsibility to Peel.

Peel, in 1842, reimposed Pitt's emergency tax on incomes. Peel's emergency was not war, but the re-establishment of national solvency and commercial credit after the recent muddled finance. He intended the Income Tax to last for three years only, but emergencies did not cease and the tax was continued. Gladstone in like manner assured the House that his renewed Income Tax was gradually to diminish till it vanished, but never fulfilled his forecast. As it was easy to collect and was so arranged as not to touch the numerous artisan voters, it has remained a permanent feature of all budgets.

XIV

TRADE-UNIONS

(i)

It is possible that future historians may see the most important feature of the Victorian age in the *Trade-union*, which then appeared as a typical organism of democratic England, and yet was not organised for the whole population but only for special and not very large classes.

Trade-unions are English in origin, yet they are not historically derived from the Middle Ages, although they owe much to the Friendly Societies of the eighteenth century, which may possibly trace some faint connection of idea with the medieval guilds ruined under Edward VI.

The root of Trade-unionism is to be found in the Factory system, which had resulted, at least during 1800–40, in making his mechanical work fill the entire life of the factory ‘hand.’¹ Without comfort, leisure or pleasure, or any hope in or for his wife and family, a man’s sole object of desire during that dreary period was the scanty chance of improvement in the wages or conditions of his toil.

The efforts of Francis Place (1793–9) had proved joint combination to be the only way of bargaining with employers, but the harsh penalties of the Combination laws frustrated Place’s endeavours and extinguished the working men’s clubs for a generation.

Even after 1824, when those laws were repealed, their societies were legally regarded only as Friendly Societies, such as had long existed in order to provide sick-pay, funeral costs and other insurance benefits for members subscribing to them, and Parliament had passed several Acts (1793, 1819, 1829, 1846, etc.) in order to discourage the formation of inefficient or positively fraudulent clubs, whereby working men often lost their savings. The most beneficial Act was that of 1829, which created a public official, the Registrar of Friendly Societies, in order to compile a public list of societies whose financial system was both honest and competent; if, after this, anybody chose to invest his savings in an unregistered club his folly was on his own head. The barrister who

¹ A moralist maintained that when ‘souls’ became ‘hands,’ commercialism had ruined the old England.

first held the post, Tidd Pratt, may be said to have taught the methods of solvent finance to the Friendly Societies all over England.

The *Trade-unions* which from 1825 sprang up in the factory districts were local societies of workers in a particular mill or trade, much on the models of Francis Place. They were organised in the locality by officials chosen by the members from among themselves, by whose self-sacrificing voluntary work most of them were established. The purpose of every Union was to obtain improved wages and conditions from the employers as well as to ensure among the members the usual *benefits* of a Friendly Society.

The standing difficulty was that the members' weekly subscriptions provided the sole funds of any Union and seldom rose to a sufficient total for all the objects desired. In consequence the 'benefits' became reduced or disappeared when a strike was undertaken, and members were apt to disagree over the choice. Many Unions in time became bankrupt and dissolved; but permanence was not necessary for success, and fresh Unions were readily formed.

The attitude of the employers to the Trade-unions varied. Many welcomed them, finding that they raised the level of intelligence—e.g. the men became reconciled to machinery—and really preferring to deal with their employees as a body. Others tried to take up an autocratic position, resenting Unions much as continental kings had resented parliaments. The Radicals, who were indignant at the Factory Acts, often objected also to Trade-unions, as equally interfering with individual liberty.

Where an employer refused to meet a Union the men's final weapon was a *strike*. This meant privation for themselves and their families and the depletion of the funds for 'benefits.' The masters might face the strike by engaging from distant places other workmen, whom they called *free labourers*. The strikers then fought the new-comers, whom they called *blacklegs*, or perhaps penalised their families. The spectacle of workmen fighting each other and of children and wives starving while mills stood idle could not but produce a powerful impression upon beholders, howsoever they might assign their blame or their sympathy. Vivid contemporary pictures have been recorded by Mrs. Gaskell in *North and South* (Manchester), and by Disraeli in *Sybil* (Yorkshire).

The attitude of the law and Parliament towards Trade-unions gradually altered from harshness to benevolence. From 1825 to 1859, while the Unions were technically Friendly Societies, members broke the law if they did anything involving "restraint of trade," "breach of contract" or "intimidation." All these offences were committed in every strike, and individual members could be, and were, indicted in the law-courts and punished. But the Trade-union itself, being unknown to the law, could not. This entailed considerable hardship on persons injured by strike methods, for the workmen individually had no funds to pay fine or compensation,

while the Trade-union, which had, could not be made amenable to the law.

The law and the public were in much the same predicament as formerly was the Crown in the fifteenth century, when it vainly tried to extract the tax due from prosperous corporate cities: "The men of the town *had* nothing, while the men of the guild *owed* nothing."¹

The Unions themselves, however, did not always benefit by their technical non-existence; for any dishonest official could embezzle their funds with impunity.

These anomalies were ended by Lord Elcho's Act (1859), which gave legal recognition to the Trade-unions, protected their funds, and declared that 'peaceable persuasion' (of *blacklegs*, non-unionists, strikers, employers) was not a breach of the law.

Like all other institutions known to history, the Trade-unions had to buy their experience. Progress was at first slow, and they naturally sought a quicker path by trying political action. The Chartist movement of 1838-48 had large support from them, but its failure and the exposure of the crude and fraudulent tricks employed in it reflected some discredit on the Unions.

The Factory Acts and Mines Acts, which so greatly improved the conditions of those great branches of trade, were not obtained by the Unions, but did them considerable service by permitting them to devote all their own energies to the wages question.

The numerous strikes of the mid-Victorian period, and especially in the 'sixties, were efforts to compel employers to pay higher wages. Innumerable incidents of violence and hardship attracted the general attention and raised some hotly debated questions: Ought not the public to assist the Unions against autocratic employers? Had not the public itself some rights prior to those of both employer and employee?

The trials which took place exhibited a third difficulty—that the law was dubious as to the steps which a Union might lawfully take during a strike. Finally, a series of brutal outrages in Sheffield and Manchester terrified society, from the proofs afforded that some of the Unions had employed secret terrorism.

Disraeli, therefore, in 1867 directed a Royal Commission to investigate the Trade-unions, and the report of the commission led to some carefully framed Acts (1869, 1871 and 1876) which endeavoured to distinguish the respective rights of the Unions and the public. After the Acts of 1869 and 1871 the employer and the workmen were placed on a level as to *breach of contract*. Formerly the defaulting workmen could be summarily imprisoned; henceforth there must be in each case a trial and conviction. With regard to the liabilities of members of a Union, the principle was laid down that no one could be prosecuted for 'conspiracy' to commit some act which would not be illegal if he had done it alone.

¹ Mrs. J. R. Green, *Town Life in the Fifteenth Century*, II. p. 216.

Trade-unions were accorded a general legal recognition, encouraged to register, and their funds safeguarded.

Henceforward "restraint of trade" disappears as a charge against Trade-unionists and "breach of contract" nearly disappears; even "intimidation" was carefully defined in such a way as to give wide latitude as to the methods of 'persuading' other men to strike. But a number of detailed provisions were also enacted with the view of protecting the public at large from suffering danger in strikes (*e.g.* with regard to gas or water supply).

In brief, it was recognised that the principle of social combination had come into conflict with that of individual liberty, and even if the latter were waived by a few idealists, the general public would hardly do the same; moreover, different social combinations might be opposed to each other. The antagonism of principles existed from the first: the Trade-union represented to its members a co-operative, or social, ideal in place of individual private struggle; but to the public it often appeared as a minority group fighting for its own ambitions regardless of public interests. Whether the general public were more, or less, enlightened than a given Union, the democratic principle common to both required that it should enforce the general will over any minority.

The Trade-unions had early discerned their best chance of facing both employers and the public in extending their co-operation. From about 1845 Unions of workmen belonging to the same trade in different localities began to join together in very large societies, the most celebrated being the *Amalgamated Society of Engineers*. This extension of the scope of the Unions produced other fresh developments: (*a*) Employers also formed combinations, and strikes quickly became more widespread and lasted longer. They were sometimes, and justly, described as a *labour war*. (*b*) Within the Unions themselves the direction of policy and management of funds became subjects of anxiety and involved a series of what may be termed constitutional and party experiments. The mode of management in any particular Union used at first to reflect, and then came to direct, the opinions of the members; officers of ability must be paid salaries, and over this arose jealousies; in short, Trade-unions have gone through the experiences of political institutions over such problems as how to attract and remunerate ability and integrity without making office the mark for intrigue. Similarly, the differing methods of control or management in various Unions seem to reflect the political experiments of most popular governments.

A fresh element of strife automatically entered into Trade-union struggles after the reforms in the Law system which culminated in abolishing certain differences of procedure between trials at Common Law or Equity (1881). This change removed a grand technicality which had hitherto favoured the Trade-unions as against the general public, and had prevented the joint funds of

the members from being liable for their acts as men and members. The full effect of the alteration in the law was not discovered till the famous Taff Vale Case (1901), when it appeared that the decisions and acts of a Union which by a strike had inflicted loss or calamity upon other persons, or companies, could now be called in question by the same kind of legal machinery as would apply to the members of any other society, and that the funds of the Union would, therefore, be liable to pay compensations.

The Unions, having been so long accustomed to their peculiar immunity, loudly clamoured to have it restored to them by special legislation. The law and the general public for twenty-five years resisted their claim to special privileges, but at length a Liberal Government passed the Trade Disputes Act of 1906, which largely (but not entirely) conceded this favour, making the position of Trade-unions privileged, and if not altogether "above the law," as sometimes claimed, certainly partially beyond its reach.

(ii)

In the 'eighties the public spirit of a number of Labour organisers led them to attempt to cope with the increasing evil of Unemployment. For a number of reasons London always contained thousands of men who were habitually without work and wages, and other cities, though in smaller proportion, showed the same dismal spectacle.

Whether Malthus was now proved to be right, population having increased beyond the means of support, or whether those economists were now proved to be wrong who had maintained that it was impossible to experience a general 'Over-production,' mattered very little. Abstract generalisations about the entire world were not to the point. Here in England there was not sufficient work (carrying wages) to employ all the population; nor could additional workshops be set up to employ them (as had been tried from Elizabeth to George III), because fresh quantities of goods could no longer find purchasers. In other words, the manufacturers had already satisfied the needs of their habitual *markets*, and when Government appealed to them to employ more men they desired to have *fresh markets* opened up to them.

This discovery of the *shrinking markets* revealed a disconcerting view of the avenues of world-commerce available for the nation. And the analysis of the causes of *Unemployment* revealed another.

It was clear to careful observers that the *unemployed* fell into three different classes: (a) There were *skilled* (meaning experienced) workmen, who had lost their employ because the employer was obliged to contract or close his business owing to alterations in the condition of his trade, such as a scarcity of raw materials (as in cotton) or a change in fashion (as when waterproofed cloth was replaced by macintosh), or of a closing foreign market (as when Germany and France began to manufacture their own machines).

These experienced workmen either refused to learn the new processes or found that the managers of the new businesses preferred employing younger men. This latter preference was strengthened by the modern rules obliging employers to compensate workmen injured by accidents.

(b) There were men termed *unskilled*, because they were not experienced in, and therefore tied to, some one particular trade, but could carry their labour wherever their strength and intelligence could find employment. They were more properly to be termed *casual* labourers, having no permanent employer and no Union. The largest employments open to them were portorage at docks, digging at new canals, railways, etc., or such agricultural work as required additional hands (corn, hay, fruit or hop harvest). None of these employments was literally 'unskilled,' but they were seasonal, and the invention of new machinery continually reduced the openings in them.

(c) There were *unemployable* men, too weak, in body or mind, to stick to any job for long. The very improvements made in the methods of providing for the poor caused an increase in the number of people who preferred to live on others, whether as paupers or 'tramps.' There were even young poets who praised the art of subsisting as wanderers.

(d) During the last half of the nineteenth century all these three classes of unemployed were being increased by the settlers who arrived in this country from foreign lands, chiefly from Eastern Europe, but also from some parts of Asia. These immigrants were willing to work for lower wages and to live in worse conditions than the Englishman, and therefore they helped both to keep wages low and Englishmen unemployed.

In the twentieth century this process became more marked, because the 'new' countries, whither the wanderers from Europe and Asia wished to go, no longer welcomed all comers but would admit only the more promising among them. The rest, having come to England as the universal port for all the world, remained here.

These effects of alien migration were understood by many observers who from time to time made suggestions for discouraging it. But the traditions of both Palmerston and the philanthropists had taken root among the idealist middle classes. "England the land of Refuge" was one of their favourite sentiments; while—"What would happen to these poor people?" if driven from this hospitable country was an unanswerable question which appeared to them to decide the case. However poor, ignorant, helpless or diseased, the alien 'ought' still to be welcomed to this generous 'land of Refuge.'

The net result might be estimated in the 'eighties of the Victorian era as many thousands of Englishmen, in London alone, habitually without work and wages. Other cities showed the same calamity, though in less enormous numbers. In 1886 a few energetic men,

the most eminent name being that of John Burns, endeavoured to force the fact on the general consciousness of the public by organising a procession of thousands of unemployed men through the streets of London. Burns and his fellow-Unionists believed that the formation of more Trade-unions was the best way of coping with this persistent poverty, and a number of Unions were formed among dock labourers, and other extremely poor workers, which aimed solely at raising wages and not at any of the usual *benefits*, because the funds they could collect were so small. From this time a new temper inspired "the *new unions*," a fierce temper which sought to subvert the social conditions which had permitted so much misery to exist.

Different remedies were suggested for unemployment. In 1889 a great strike at the Thames docks exhibited the resolution of the agitators and the labourers, but the subsequent organising of labour at the docks of London and Liverpool, while it provided more regular employment for the men concerned, could not 'absorb' larger numbers of them. A day of eight hours in factories, mines, etc., so as to allow for two shifts of work, and therefore employ double gangs of men, was next advocated. But this soon proved fallacious, because few employers, faced by shrinking markets, desired double production and a double wages bill, nor did the workmen like the practical inconveniences in their family life which resulted. The stubborn fact of the 'shrinking markets' defeated nearly all the efforts at obtaining more employment in manufactures, not excepting the provision by Government of Employment Exchanges (1910).

The various efforts made revealed some interesting variations in general sentiment during the century :—

Nearly the whole of the surplus population now desired to live in cities and by working at manufactures. The descendants of those who, in the late decades of the eighteenth century, had so reluctantly travelled to the factory towns, had lost all tradition of the delights of country life and regarded crowded streets as their natural and rightful heritage. Their objection to emigration was mainly that it probably would entail agricultural labour, which the townsfolk declared in the same breath to be 'unskilled' and therefore degrading, as well as too difficult for their unaccustomed hands, and too 'risky' for their superior intelligence.

Within the Unions themselves some fresh sources of discord had opened. (a) The less skilful or less energetic workmen showed jealousy of the more successful, considering that those who accomplished a larger quantity, or a better quality, of work than themselves, injured them. They began to demand a definite standard of output and hours which should be enforced upon all and consequently that the standard must be cut down to the compass of the poorer workers. This seemed like an artificial introduction into manufactures of the stumbling-block of ancient 'common

agriculture' when the minimum standard for all had resulted in the lack of incentive to better tillage. But jealousy was victorious, in the main, in ending the system of *piece-work* (or pay on results). The skilful must not earn more than the unskilful.

(b) The direction of the policy and funds of the Unions by permanent and salaried officers often bred discontent among the members, expressed by disobedience to the injunctions of the officers. So far no solution of this difficulty has been found. The effect has been to diminish the confidence felt in the Trade-unions, because it is uncertain whether the contracts and agreements made by them will be carried out.

(c) The treatment of a minority of dissidents by the majority also presented difficulties. In many trades there have been some workers who for private reasons declined to join the Union; and in many Unions there have been minority members who refused to carry out the decisions of the majority. The law-courts have steadily declined to enforce by penalties the decisions of a Union upon its individual members, and the majority, therefore, has endeavoured to coerce the opposition within the society either by penalising the dissidents, or by utilising the employers or the general public as levers, by treating these in such a way (perhaps by a strike) as to force them, in their own interests, to insist upon the dissident minority obeying the commands of the others. But such tactics have usually enlisted the obstinacy of the public on the side of the independent minority, and have not, therefore, as a rule, gained their end.

Finally, there arose two external difficulties in the path of the Unions which they could not by themselves easily solve.

(i) The assumption of the first half of the Victorian age that wages could and should be raised commanded, on the whole, a general assent until the 'eighties. But when the establishment of Trade-unions as matters of course in nearly every trade, during that decade, coincided with a large decline in the activity of commerce, it was recognised by business men that, as the profits of trade were not increasing, higher wages must mean lower dividends. This was not to the interest of shareholders, and, as it was not the desire of any of the Unions to destroy the trade by which they lived, it appeared that the figure of *wages* could not be settled alone, but might have to be limited by that figure of dividend which was necessary to ensure that enough capital and brains would continue to be put into the business, and what figure this must be, in each case, could hardly be positively determined.

(ii) The British Trade-union was inevitably copied on the Continent, and, as inevitably, became at once impressed by certain non-British characteristics, just as had occurred when English philosophy, parliaments and party government were copied.

The fundamental differences between Great Britain and the Continent in respect to class distinctions and character of govern-

ment at once produced their effect. In the nineteenth century, as in earlier ages, *class* in most parts of Europe virtually meant *caste*, each family being practically fixed in its employment and social rank, whereas in England it simply signified the position occupied by any individual or family, perhaps temporarily. Here all men were legally equal; all except peers and their eldest sons were alike unprivileged and free commoners; all careers were open to all; differences due to office or wealth need not last for life, nor descend in the family. Social equality by the mode of 'levelling up' became increasingly the rule as the Victorian age neared its close. Anyone in England may step into, or out of, any 'class,' which becomes a matter of occupation, or property, or manners, rather than of birth (or *caste*).¹

In England, therefore, the struggles of Trade-unions with employers were simply struggles to obtain better wages or conditions, and not an outcome of any 'class-hatred.' Most people did not want to ruin a social and political system in which they might themselves attain, or see their children attain, to profitable and honourable success. In Lancashire, where the opportunities of the cotton trade frequently enabled the clever workman to become a mill-owner and a rich man, it was noticed that the newly-won fortunes were seldom retained by the families, and a new proverb was minted: "Three generations from clogs to clogs."

In every stage of English society which we can observe historically, at least from the three Plantagenet Edwards, and probably from Alfred, the 'upper classes' present much the same aspect: owners of property, local officials, members of Parliament, builders of mansions and churches, pious founders (whether of churches, monasteries, schools, hospitals or museums), political and military leaders, etc.; but the families which compose these 'upper' and the 'middle' classes were continually changing; there has always been a free circulation of blood, and political 'revolution' usually meant little more than the substitution of a fresh set of families in the pleasant positions.

But on the Continent social conditions were very different, except in France. The Russian, or German, or Polish 'proletariat' could look for no ladders to fortune, and their envy and resentment had but increased since the cataclysm of the French Revolution levelled social barriers in France and her immediate neighbours, and the prosperous American Revolution had exhibited the possibility of beginning a social system afresh.

In consequence, the Trade-unions of Europe were likely to engage in political agitation, and to set up as their political ideal a repetition of French revolution (by which was still meant destruction and plunder) and probably bloodshed. It was also in keeping

¹ The diatribes which are still occasionally to be read against 'class' are usually derived from the Continent or from American assumptions of what British classes *must* be like.

with French-revolutionary precedent that they should endeavour to unite the Trade-unions of workmen of all countries in a joint attack upon all other classes. The British Trade-unions, therefore, were and are faced by a dilemma, whether to continue on their own course or to change their objects and methods so as to fall into line with Continental Associations.

XV

CHAMBERLAIN AND RADICALISM

THE tendency of political parties to fissure was illustrated within the House of Commons, in both the Conservative and Liberal ranks, for two sufficient reasons. In the first place, a party being no disciplined army, two able lieutenants of Lord Salisbury and Mr. Gladstone, respectively, were ambitious of asserting themselves and thought that their own programmes and methods, more extreme ('advanced' was the favourite term) than their leaders cared to endorse, would carry the party to office. In the one case, Lord Randolph Churchill attempted to take the lead of the Conservative party out of Salisbury's hands; on the other side, Joseph Chamberlain sought to persuade Gladstone to adopt the advanced programme.

But the second and stronger reason was that there existed in the nation a large body of sentiment far from satisfied with either of the two great parties, so that the advanced leaders might hope to win considerable support. As the well-known name of 'Radical' was associated with Gladstone's supporters, Chamberlain and Bright, Churchill was obliged to invent for his own party the title 'Tory-democracy,' but he found himself unable to compete with either Chamberlain or Lord Salisbury. The *Radical* reformers had become known to the nation as no mere wing of Liberalism but rather a kind of modern 'root and branch' party, aggressively democratic and bent on the destruction of much that both Liberals and Conservatives proposed to reform step by step.

The early fame of Radicalism was due to John Bright, first in South Lancashire and then in Birmingham, but its more successful organiser and leader was the younger man, Joseph Chamberlain. The party was never numerically strong enough to control Parliament, but gained considerable successes in combination with first one and then the other of the main parties. Largely though not entirely composed of the artisan voters enfranchised in 1868, it was even more markedly local, and indeed offers a striking instance of geographical influence on politics. Just as the Free-trade policy had been carried by what was called 'the Manchester school,' so the collectivist legislation of the late Victorian era was due to the Birmingham school, which had the distinction of providing a leader more important in our political history than many a Prime Minister.

Chamberlain himself had, like Cobden, acquired his early training

in London, and migrated from the city to obtain an independent fortune, which he built up, not in the textile county, now no longer a gold-mine, but in the metropolis of steel machinery, the dominant feature of the new commercial world.

The bases of Bright's Radicalism had been Nonconformity, pacifism and individualism. He demanded No Church influence or Church rates, No war or war taxation, No laws to hamper a manufacturer in "doing what he would with his own."

Chamberlain, unrestricted by Bright's quakerism, announced a more positive doctrine: Equal treatment by the State for all forms of religion; popular decision by majority of votes alone on all State questions; equality for all citizens. This was interpreted to mean a secular State with an impartial disregard of all religion, no established Church, no Lords, no class or other privilege. Landed property was counted as privilege, because it was limited naturally in extent, but monied wealth was not, because it could, in theory, be obtained by any man. Perhaps the distinction was derived from the U.S.A., but it was a self-evident axiom in Birmingham, which adopted that superior attitude of city men towards country men which had long been habitual among Londoners, and was in the 'sixties general in large towns—a marked revulsion from eighteenth-century habits.

The *nouveaux riches* of this era regarded the country as a pleasure resort or a food shop for townspeople. Chamberlain's land doctrine, with its implied opposition of urban and rural standards and interests, was not wholly new in English politics, but appeared novel because Chamberlain seemed to evolve it, not out of any abstract objection to peers and landlords, like continental philosophers, but from sympathy with the ideas of the United States which he helped to popularise in England.

After 1868 Americanism came again, and more universally, into fashion, the standards of the United States were made familiar by numbers of books easily purchased and easily read. "Every man is free to get rich there" was the common cry. That he was at least as free in England was never noticed. Chamberlain, who seldom in the early part of his career offended his audiences by attempting to instruct them, used to take for granted their acceptance of the simpler democratic axioms, and was not ashamed to conceal his own better knowledge and voice the crude fallacies to which he knew they were accustomed, as—that English peers represent the soldiers of William the Conqueror and the base sycophants of wicked kings, or that every man is born with a natural right to own a portion of his native soil. "Tom Paine!" cried the Conservatives, and laughed, in the mistaken assumption that what the educated knew to be an obsolete fallacy could not be dangerous.

Chamberlain, however, was before all things a practical statesman; an abstract ideal which was impossible to reach he would

discard for the nearest approximation attainable. A Republic might be, in his view, the absolutely best form of government, but republicanism was an idea dead and buried in England long ago. On the other hand, many of the characteristics of republican life as seen in the U.S.A. already flourished here, and others might be encouraged. Universal adult suffrage, a system of general education, the disestablishment of the Church, the abolition of the House of Lords, would go far towards realising that levelling of class, to be graded henceforth, however, by money, which rejoiced the commercial eye in the United States. Even if the Established Church and the House of Lords could not be abolished they might perhaps be whittled away into insignificance.

Chamberlain's practical mind seized on all opportunities for putting his principles into action; in debating societies he familiarised small audiences with his views; as a member of the Corporation of Birmingham he induced that city to adopt large plans of social improvement; above all, he made Education the battlefield of his radical and secularising ideas of 'religious equality.' There was little likelihood that Parliament would deliberately disestablish the Church, but some ground for believing that it might be manoeuvred into an Education Act which should turn the clergy out of the schools. He founded in Birmingham an *Education League* which advocated a national system of elementary schools to which parents should be compelled to send their children; no fees, therefore, were to be required nor was any religious teaching to be allowed. Religion, said the League, ought to be left to the home, the pastors and Sundays. By the time that Forster's *Elementary Education Act* was introduced (1870), Chamberlain's League had become a national league, and during the debates in the House of Commons he became a well-known figure, though his demand for secularism in the name of 'religious equality' was endorsed neither by the House nor by the population. Forster, himself a Radical and Nonconformist, declared that excluding the Bible from education would be repellent to the people, and he shrewdly pointed to the weak spot in the secularist case: "What does the League want?" he asked. "Wherever the majority are of their views they can carry them!" They could put their views into practice, that is, through any school-board if they persuaded the majority. It became, in fact, clear that the Radicals, in the name of Nonconformity, were attempting to secularise elementary teaching. Every political party naturally endeavours to stamp its views on legislation, but the attempt to carry a general prohibition of scriptural teaching came with an ill grace from the champion of universal suffrage and the supremacy of majorities. Gladstone had no intention of losing the support of Yorkshire in order to conciliate Birmingham, or of Nonconformist ministers to please a few secularists, and during his first Ministry (1869-74) his decision was all-important.

If the issue of Forster's much-debated Bill (see Chap. XII) was less of a Radical triumph than Chamberlain had hoped, the contest had exhibited his skill in organising the new electorate, and the political machinery which he had devised became in the 'seventies famous.

This, known as the *Birmingham Caucus*, was a fruit of his acquaintance with the U.S.A. and his popularity among the inhabitants of the Midland towns.

In all the local divisions of Birmingham, and in many places outside it, political societies were formed where the electors became familiar with the ideas of their leaders. A central committee was formed by collecting representatives from the local societies, and this committee, and particularly its inner circle of managers, drew up the programme and virtually directed the political action of the members at large. When Gladstone, in the height of Disraeli's power, determined to resume the Liberal leadership, it was through the *Birmingham Caucus* that he saw his best hope of recovering power, and the Caucus and Chamberlain definitely recognised him as their leader. The Radicals, like the Irish party, perceived themselves to be powerless in isolation, but hoped to obtain by means of Liberal votes and Gladstone's popularity some of their objects in return for giving their support in the House of Commons.

In the meantime Birmingham was providing a fine object lesson in the social practice of Radicalism, or, as it would now be termed, *municipal socialism*. From 1869-76 Chamberlain led the Town Council in accomplishing such public works for the benefit of all the citizens as ancient Rome herself would have admired. Doubtless in Birmingham the majority shared his views, yet it was no unanimous shout of ratepayers, but the vigorous leadership and munificence of a great citizen, which within a decade made the education, sanitation and municipal services of Birmingham the models for reformers in other towns. When at the close of ten years he laid down the mayoralty of his city in order to represent her in Parliament, he left her furnished with fine municipal buildings and ample schools, with a park, free library and art gallery, the owner of water and gas systems supplying all her citizens, and in process of transforming a gloomy area of 'slum property' into healthy and dignified streets.

Chamberlain, then, was already a noted figure when in 1876 he began his career in Parliament and became acquainted with the difficulties which there beset the translation of abstract principles into action. Was the Radical policy towards Ireland to be decided by the popular vote of Englishmen or of Irishmen? If Mr. Gladstone chose to ignore the Radical ideals, was there any way of asserting them? If Gladstone and Chamberlain should come to disagree, which was the *Caucus* bound to support?

On becoming Prime Minister again in 1880, Gladstone gave office to three of the Birmingham men, Chamberlain, Dilke and Collings,

the first being in the Cabinet, and therefore jointly responsible for the policy of the Government. As President of the Board of Trade he carried some useful Acts on Bankruptcy and Patents, but was unable to carry the *Merchant Shipping Bill* advocated by Plimsoll, the Radical member for Derby, the opposition to it from business men being extremely powerful.

The new Franchise Act of 1884, however, which bestowed votes upon the poorer agricultural class, was a triumph for the Radicals, and when the House of Lords refused to pass it unless the ministerial proposals for redistribution of seats were revealed, Chamberlain poured out vehement denunciations on popular platforms, trying to kindle a constitutional battle between 'the Peers and the People.' But in this his tirades failed, as Gladstone preferred to save his franchise measure by the simpler process of informing Parliament of his plan for the rearrangement of seats. The whole affair was an unnecessary party manoeuvre and was easily settled by consultation between Hartington and Balfour as soon as Gladstone relinquished his unconstitutional foible of keeping his legislative proposal a secret, even from his own Cabinet, till he sprang it on the House of Commons.

But with regard to Ireland, Chamberlain differed gravely and in principle from Gladstone. He objected to setting up in Ireland a parliamentary government separate from that of the rest of the British Isles, but advocated for her, as also for Scotland and for Wales, a minor elected body, or council, to decide her purely local affairs. His scheme would have the merit of relieving Parliament from much detailed local business as well as from the speeches of numerous members who wished to advertise themselves to their constituents in newspaper reports. But Gladstone, possibly thinking of nothing but the Irish party, and certainly growing more despotic with his advancing years, pointedly refused any discussion with Chamberlain, much to the concern of his other adherents.

To the contemptuous treatment meted out to him by the Prime Minister Chamberlain replied, first, by a severe criticism of the Home-rule Bill, which he maintained would neither secure the imperial authority of Crown and Parliament nor satisfy the demands of the Irish, and secondly, by emphasising once more, and very plainly, in January 1885, the political aims of the Radical party, for the sake of which, in fact, he and his Caucus had consented to join the Liberal party. They were concerned chiefly with Great Britain: *Free Education* (which therefore would have to be paid for by increased general taxation), *Graduated taxation* (the wealthy to pay not merely a larger amount but on a higher scale), *County self-government*, provision for *Small Holdings and Allotments*. As these four points were Chamberlain's own and not endorsed by Gladstone, the list was promptly dubbed "the Unauthorised Programme." It was taken for a warning to Gladstone and a strong bid for the general support of the poorer voters, all the

more so because it did not include such controversial aims as Manhood Suffrage, Payment of M.P.'s, Reform in land tenure, or Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church, all of them common platform topics at Radical meetings.

The competition for votes between Gladstone and Chamberlain (or between the *authorised* and the *unauthorised* programmes of reform) was concentrated during the General Election of 1886 on the question of the Home-rule Bill, the fate of which has already been related (Chap. X). The Caucus (now more correctly entitled the *National Federation of Liberal Associations*, and no longer exclusively of the Midlands) elected for Gladstone against Chamberlain, although the managers in Birmingham itself were solid for Chamberlain, and Gladstone believed that he had succeeded in annexing the party machinery without the embarrassing leader himself. When, then, his Home-rule Bill was defeated he appealed to the country, for the second time within eight months, confident of success at the polls. The tremendous defeat inflicted on him was the more crushing because he had issued a vehement appeal (May 1886) asserting that he and his Bill were opposed by

“station, title, wealth, social influence, the professions, or the large majority of them—in a word, the spirit and power of *class*.”

He added that on all great questions the *classes* had

“fought uniformly on the wrong side and had uniformly been beaten by a power more difficult to marshal, but resistless when marshalled—by the upright sense of the nation.”

Whether this kind of fulmination were designed to entice the Radicals from Chamberlain's banner, or really to arouse “the *masses* against the *classes*,” as the cry went, it was alike ineffective. More telling among the electorate was the appeal made to the agricultural voters by Chamberlain's supporter, Collings, who put foremost among the aims of the Radical party a scheme for providing small holdings for the country working man so as to enable him to grow food or keep stock for himself. “Three acres and a cow!” went the popular cry. The response of the country voter proved how exactly Collings had gauged his real desires and interests, and grievous was the disappointment when neither fields nor kine resulted.¹ Interrogation was even pushed home to Gladstone, whose ungrateful and contemptuous disclaimers of “a Mr. Jesse Collings” lost him troops of new adherents and doubtless helped to swell the ranks of ‘Tory democracy.’ That there were districts where the agricultural worker could and did hold small pieces of land himself, and that there his lot was greatly ameliorated (*e.g.* Oxfordshire, Berks, Shropshire, Somerset), was doubtless known

¹ In one Shropshire village a couple of farm hands gave notice: “We're to have a cow and three acres, and we can live off that.” Vainly the farmer urged them to wait till they received this bonus: “we've savings enough to last till then.” Eventually, unable to bear local ridicule, they migrated.

to many serious politicians; not the conception but the practice of it was the difficulty. No Government was likely to advocate the confiscation of land or to provide enormous funds for compulsory purchase.

On the other hand, the Liberal Ministry of 1892-5 won its only political successes with measures of Radical complexion, the most remarkable being the Act setting up Parish Councils and the measure for graduating the tax known as *the death duties*, which were so reconstructed by Harcourt as to press heavily on owners of land, with no allowance for their virtual position as life-owners only.

The Radical party, however, did not share the credit for these measures, feeling unable to support the Ministry of Lord Rosebery on account of his adoption of Home Rule. Their Unionist principles therefore retained them in line with the Conservatives and several of them accepted office in Lord Salisbury's third Cabinet (1895), Chamberlain himself becoming Secretary of State for the Colonies.

One result of this combination of the Birmingham party with the Conservatives was the very large Unionist majority (152) won in the General Election of 1895, which permitted of rapid parliamentary work and much shorter sessions; another was that the weakness of the Liberal party was so discouraging, and the party leaders were so much hampered by the fierce speeches of Mr. Gladstone, that the party could hardly continue in working order. Gladstone had resigned the lead of the Liberal party in March 1894. Rosebery, who succeeded him as Prime Minister and leader, resigned office in 1895 and withdrew from the leadership of the party about a year later. Harcourt, the next leader, resigned at the close of 1898. The Liberals then elected Campbell-Bannerman as their leader, a man whose delightful personality won him popularity and political influence whether as Leader of Opposition or in Office.

Another result of the Conservative and Unionist alliance was an agreed Education policy, Chamberlain assenting to grants of money to Voluntary schools (1897) on the ground that, as these schools provided for more than half of the children, the expense of abolishing them and replacing them by Board schools would be excessive. A Board for Education was permanently established in 1899.

Under the same Ministry several practical Acts were carried for the benefit of the working class: Agricultural Rating was somewhat reformed, steps were taken to form Conciliation Boards in cases of trade disputes, and factories and mines were placed under further regulations (1895-6).

Chamberlain's acceptance of the Conservative Education Bill lost him some supporters in Birmingham, where the more ardent section of 'Political Dissent' (as this party was habitually termed) refused to recognise their own position as a minority.

The political direction of Radicalism was already passing to a new generation, while Chamberlain himself was advancing upon a

fresh and a wider platform. His experience as Colonial Secretary developed in him convictions which made him for a third time a pioneer in a great public cause. The protagonist of *Municipal Socialism* and of State Education now opened his eyes to the grandeur of the British Dominions beyond the seas, and discovered in the moral and political importance of the British Empire an ideal to which he devoted the rest of his life.

Whether as a Minister of the Crown or as a man of business he was compelled to recognise that the economic position of this country had become peculiar and puzzling. Our adoption of the policy of *Free-trade* had by no means fulfilled Cobden's glowing prophecies, because other countries refused to accept it save to the extent of pouring their products into our open markets while they maintained their own high tariffs against the goods which we exported to them.

The first thing always done by British colonies when they attained to self-government was to set up a 'tariff wall' designed to *protect* their own manufactures, though they *discriminated* in favour of the Home country by placing lower duties on British than on alien goods. Besides this, our principal commercial rivals in the general markets of the world, Germany and the U.S.A., were steadily discriminating against us in order to give large advantages to their own industries.

Regarding economics mainly as a useful and important sphere of public policy, and not (as the English frequently did) as an abstract philosophy, these and other States encouraged particular manufactures by grants of money or by special advantages as to taxation, contracts, transport, etc., in order to enable them to provide employment for a large population. As the European States now controlled large parts of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, while South America could hardly avoid complying with the standards of the U.S.A., this system was dominating the world markets. The rulers of Germany, especially, whose success was making her the economic as well as the military model of the modern world, as they did not possess any foreign colonies suitable for European emigrants, had no intention of encouraging energetic German youth to become British, American or Brazilian citizens, but avowedly aimed at keeping as dense a population at home as could possibly be supported. The *bounties* bestowed on home factory products and the high duties imposed on imports formed a fundamental part of Germany's domestic political system, for they alone enabled her to attain that end. We ourselves were affected because the German system was completed by disposing of surplus products in other countries, especially by sending them to England to be sold at any figure that would just undersell the English maker's prices. This 'dumping,' as the English called it, had become a severe handicap to English manufactures, and Chamberlain, as both statesman and business man, had begun to

say that a *Free-trade* which only offered our open door to the shut doors of other nations required some kind of modification. He pointed out that recent social legislation, such as the Workmen's Compensation Act, had imposed upon our factories and mines, and our employers in general, several costly responsibilities which made the complete system of production more expensive than those of other countries, and thus upset free competition; he perceived that it was vain to imagine a possible conversion of our business rivals to Free-trade doctrine, and he therefore advocated some imposition of tariffs in order to prevent the foreign importer from selling at less than the English cost price.

Chamberlain forgot Disraeli's warning to the Conservatives about *Free-trade*—that, once accomplished, it had been accepted as a part of the constitution and could not be undone. It now ranked among those famous words of history which have become rallying cries for later theorists, and so has come to stand for something more than the original meaning of the word itself. Like *Magna Carta* or *Habeas Corpus*, *Free-trade* had become a sacred standard of thought with a vast population; to impugn it was rebellion and blasphemy, and to improve it would hurt pockets and upset parties.

Trusting, however, to the strength of reason, Chamberlain endeavoured to impart to the nation the conviction which to him was as clear as daylight: that Germany, France or the U.S.A. were beyond our persuasions, whereas the British Empire was an inexhaustible world-wide market if all its parts were but interlaced in a system. A typical instance, he held, was sugar—an article which had formerly served the elder Pitt as text for a not dissimilar plea. European beet sugar was now being poured into England at a lower price than West India cane sugar could be sold at now that slave labour was abolished. Chamberlain urged a duty on the beet sugar, but none on the cane sugar. Similarly, having regard to the ever-increasing duties placed by the U.S.A. upon British goods, he desired a duty on maize (called by Americans *corn*), though not necessarily upon wheat.

"Hands off the People's food!" was the cry immediately raised, nobody pausing to inquire what kind of 'corn' was meant, though only fifty years before the Irish had protested that England wanted to poison them with the American corn, while the English, who used it as fodder for animals, would have loudly voiced their disgust had maize been offered to them for cakes and porridge.

In order to bring his principle before the national mind, Chamberlain retired from political office—thus for a second time relinquishing his personal position to champion his ideal. He undertook a crusade of oratory and founded a society, the Tariff Reform League, to further his views. He was not successful in persuading the Conservative and Unionist chiefs to adopt his policy in practice. Balfour recollected not only the aphorism of Disraeli but the fall of Peel, and was above all things intent upon preserving the strength

of his party. If Chamberlain should achieve the conversion of the people to this new policy, he would, he intimated, rejoice. Till then, *Protection* could not come within the scope of practical politics.

The natural results were that Balfour was blamed for shirking the question, that the Liberal party invoked the spectre of famine ("Vote for the large loaf!"), that the Conservative party was paralysed by the uncertainty of programme, and that Chamberlain wore out his own strength disastrously on the impossible task of preaching to a nation. "Think!" he once urged on a London audience—"think imperially!" But they only made a joke of the phrase.¹

¹ The action of Birmingham in pronouncing against Gladstone's Home Rule has often been a topic of speculation. But it may well have been due to Gladstone's misjudgment. His devoted friend, Morley, urged him to conciliate the influential Chamberlain, to ask him to visit him at Hawarden and talk the Bill over with him. Gladstone haughtily refused until his wife persuaded him. Chamberlain came and went, but no word of politics passed Gladstone's lips. Then came the election. The present writer can recollect hearing the wife of a leading Birmingham citizen ask him why they now disapproved of Home Rule? "You don't understand, my dear," he replied, "We don't care about Ireland one way or the other; but Gladstone has treated Joe *abominably*, and we're going to show him we won't have it!" Certainly Gladstone's arrogance cost him dear.

XVI

THE BRITISH EMPIRE. (A) CANADA AND AUSTRALASIA

EVEN before the accession of Victoria it had become evident that 'foreign' relations no longer signified 'European' but world-wide connections. During her long reign the acceleration of communication brought populations into ever closer contact over their mutual interests. Men of commerce and men of letters believed that this closer intercourse must produce friendliness. Men of politics might be less certain.

The most remarkable proof of the interlacing interests of the world, and of the achievements of Victorian England, was the rapid growth of the larger colonies into vigorous new countries, which before the close of the reign composed, together with the British Isles, a single nationality distributed through most of the habitable parts of the globe.

These new British countries, all inheriting the one national tradition of language, literature, law, history and religion, yet differed widely from one another in origin and circumstances, and have continued to develop their special characteristics. But with regard to their political relations with the mother country there is now less contrast than in the early part of Victoria's reign.

The natural instinct of Englishmen to create order and to control themselves has enabled ministers at home and colonists everywhere to organise new political systems suitable to modern conditions. The whole is habitually and correctly termed the British Empire, from a natural comparison with the ancient Roman Empire, that first grand example of a political whole composed of parts, each part a distinct unit, but all combined by a common civilisation and acknowledging one sovereign.

After the establishment of the United States it was assumed there and in Europe, and even sometimes at home, that the other British colonies would 'naturally' follow the same course. That they did not is the strongest witness to the vitality of English constitutional principle. The thirteen North American Colonies form the exception; Canada, Newfoundland, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Jamaica and all the other islands or territories, the rule.

In brief, the system which in no long time became recognised has been to develop the Crown Colony of old custom into a self-governing state; (1) the Governors and subordinate officials of

Crown Colonies were and are appointed by the sovereign, as advised by the responsible minister, and their salaries are provided by Parliament, which therefore may also criticise and even disallow their actions. (2) When the colony desired it, a Representative body was added, to which was entrusted increasing responsibilities, especially as to finance. (3) When the resources of the population and their desire make it clearly feasible, a complete self-governing Constitution is drawn up, only the Governor, as the royal deputy, being still appointed by the Crown. It is then a *Dominion*, and no longer a *Colony*, and can, indeed, even revise its own Constitution.

The great self-governing Dominions are constitutionally independent of the British Parliament in the legislative sphere, and in the executive sphere are linked with Great Britain and the rest of the British Empire only through their common allegiance to the Crown. There is a link between the judicial systems of different parts of the Empire in the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, which is the final Court of Appeal from the courts of all Dominions and Colonies. There is also a non-legal but very powerful link between the whole of the British countries in the Navy and in the persons of the Royal Family. It is historically of some interest to remember that both the Navy and the Privy Council with its Judicial Committee were royal institutions, not creations of Parliament.

The King in his own person, then, is in these latter days, as in the dawn of English history, at once the Head and the personification of the combined English peoples.

The minor settlements, or Colonies, are administered through the Colonial Office, the head of which is responsible to Parliament. But in a less direct way all the parts of the Empire may actually, though not technically, come to depend at times and in some degree on the parliamentary sanction of funds raised by taxation in Great Britain for expenditure on colonial government, and particularly upon the royal navy, the joint protector of all. Such difficulties as occasionally arose in Victorian times between the Home Government and sundry Colonies arose out of the difficulties of the Colony itself.

The constitutional problem of the relations of Dominion Prime Ministers and Cabinets with those of Great Britain has never been resolved by official pronouncement, but during the World War Prime Ministers from the Dominions were invited to sit with the War Cabinet, and did so, and for many months His Majesty's Government was represented on the Continent by a South African minister.

(i) CANADA

The North American settlements had always been involved in European politics, but their position became more critical after the United States were severed from England in 1783. For the

New Englanders not only cherished their traditional animosity to the French and Romanist population of Lower Canada, but extended it to the many thousands of American loyalists who fled from the revenge of their fellow-countrymen to New Brunswick or to the wilds beyond the Great Lakes known as Ontario, or Upper Canada. From Great Britain itself a steady flow of emigrants continually went to all these regions and to Newfoundland, urged outwards by the hard conditions of life at home. To them, in 1812, the citizens of the United States had supplied the kind of external pressure which most quickly teaches separate provinces and populations to combine together. Having declared war on Great Britain they hastily set out to conquer these outlying Provinces, which "ought" to be so glad to renounce a tyrannical monarchy for an ideal Republic.

Misunderstanding the generous intentions of the U.S.A., the French Canadians gallantly saved Montreal, holding out under Governor Carleton, but in Upper Canada the Americans, having previously prepared a fleet on Lake Ontario, straightway raided the capital, Toronto, and burned it and the Parliament House. By way of reply, the Canadians set to work to build a fleet of their own on the Lake, while a British force landed on the Atlantic shores of the U.S., made a daring return raid overland to Washington and burned down the Government Buildings of the Republic, to the loud and long indignation of the Americans.

This war ended in 1814.

The story of the English, and still more of the Scottish, colonisation of North America suggests comparison with the coming of the Anglo-Saxons to Britain. Where the movement was most successful the immigrants settled down in large groups of neighbours, directed by a leader. Sometimes disbanded regiments, especially after the Seven Years' War and after Waterloo, provided many hundreds of men accustomed to co-operate together. The Earl of Egremont brought 700 families from his estates. A little Highland clan, McNab, came in a body, led by its chief. One Highland regiment was led by its chaplain. Thousands of Scots came from the Highlands in the last two decades of George III's reign, and settled in New Brunswick and part of Nova Scotia. A young Lord Douglas, succeeding unexpectedly to the wealth and dignities of Earl of Selkirk, devoted his resources and great abilities to transplanting both Scottish and Irish peasant families by the hundred to the Atlantic Provinces; 800 families it is said, to Prince Edward Island alone, besides founding the first settlement on the Red River, the nucleus of the modern Manitoba.

With the cessation of the war, the emigrant ships increased. The new-comers brought their local habits of self-government and religious worship. The shores of the St. Lawrence and Lakes Erie and Ontario were mapped into townships. Presbyterians or Roman-catholics were accompanied by their own pastors. For

clergy among the English settlers the Home Government had long ago provided, so far as it could contrive, by allocating a certain proportion of the open lands to form a 'Clergy Reservation,' the rents whereof were to furnish salaries for parish clergy.

But the settlers brought also the habitual Scottish suspicion of Episcopacy and Popery, and the habitual English suspicion of Frenchmen, and as the French Canadians of Lower Canada, a larger population though less energetic, regarded the Upper Canadians as detestable heretics, the elements were present of a traditional strife which in Great Britain had by this time subsided. The chances of internal dissension were increased by the intense loyalty of the English population of Upper Canada, including the 'United Empire Loyalists' (descendants from the U.S.A. refugees). They and their local officers and rulers lived in a state of perpetual suspicion lest 'Revolution' (either American or French) should produce some Republican attempt to secede from the Crown and to destroy, in the name of 'Liberty and Equality,' their newly and hardly won homes. This dread often caused the Canadian Government to act with rigour, and in no long time there came into existence a governing class curiously resembling the English Whigs of the eighteenth century.

The corrupt government which ensued provoked resistance, and when it was seen that reform could not be obtained, an attempt at insurrection followed, directed at Quebec by a French political leader, Papineau, and in Toronto by an immigrant Scotch journalist. Each announced a separate 'Republic' but found very slight support. Papineau fled to the States; the journalist, with help from sundry Americans, ensconced himself on an island above the Falls of Niagara, fired at the patrols on the river bank, and drew adherents and supplies from his American sympathisers. Some determined loyalists therefore went across to the American vessel which supplied him, towed it into the current, fired it, and sent it over Niagara. This being a technical breach of the peace between Great Britain and the United States, the British Government made a full apology, though Irish-Americans continued to go 'raiding' for a year or two on Canadian territory.

The Home Government realised that this party strife in Canada must be pacified by an impartial authority. Lord Durham was sent out as Governor to report, and he recommended, what was in 1840 accomplished, the union of the two Canadas in one Province, with a joint Parliament at Montreal to be responsible for the government under a constitutional Governor.

It was long, however, before local quarrels subsided. Mutual rage over endowments for the Clergy exploded in the burning down of the new Parliament House by 'Loyalists.' Montreal and the commercial interests, which in that city were supreme, began to advocate annexation by the United States, and obtained some support from the farmers, because the establishment of Free Trade

in corn in England had ended the preference which they had enjoyed hitherto. They now had to compete with the United States, Canadian corn being much more costly to market in England on account of the more difficult ocean transport.

But these agitations died away by degrees as the Canadian Parliament succeeded in removing the grievances of the French Canadians and the denominational jealousies. Liberal money grants were made to the former, in order to extinguish old feudal claims, while the latter were pacified by the disestablishment of the Episcopal and the Presbyterian Churches, the Clergy Reserves being confiscated, to be applied to a secular education system (1854).

Whilst the two Canadas were alternately quarrelling and combining, the maritime Provinces (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island) were busily populating their hills and dales, building and planting.

During a still longer period the immense regions of the West and the North-West were almost entirely left to the native Red Indians. Old maps show the whole as an untracked wilderness called "HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY'S TERRITORY."

From the time of Charles II, who granted a charter of monopoly of the trade, this company had conducted a lucrative but arduous commerce in furs. Indians used to being the pelts to the Company's isolated forts, and for some two centuries the managers—invariably Scotsmen—and the natives observed a standard of honesty and justice probably unequalled in any other mercantile records.

But the Hudson's Bay Company, like the East India Company, suffered from the poaching of intruders who refused to share in the regular liabilities of the chartered Company, and this rivalry brought about the ruin of the Earl of Selkirk's attempt to colonise the *Red River* (part of Manitoba). The Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, who was himself superintending the colony, was set upon by the poaching traders and, with twenty of his companions, massacred in 1816.

No more settlers ventured to the central plains as yet. Selkirk died, defrauded and worn out. But the discovery in 1858 of gold in the rivers and mountains of the West (BRITISH COLUMBIA) brought about the detachment of that vast region from the Company's authority and opened it to troops of adventurous explorers.

The elements of government were from the beginning extended to the new nomadic population, at first by the representatives of the British Government, later by the authority of the Canadian Dominion. In consequence, the startling development of British Columbia was never disgraced. The same precedents were promptly followed when gold was discovered in the far north, at Klondike (from 1896).

In 1867 took place the epoch-making confederation of these North American Colonies, when New Brunswick, Nova Scotia,

Quebec (or Lower Canada) and Ontario (or Upper Canada) in their four respective Parliaments accepted the scheme of union which their delegates had drawn out, and the Act which embodied the federation was then sent to London, carried as a Bill through the Imperial Parliament and ratified by the Queen.

The Dominion of Canada, as soon as it came into being, consolidated itself by purchasing from the Hudson's Bay Company its rights or claims in the North-West, by establishing an outline of government and a very real order in British Columbia, and by founding the famous North-West Mounted Police as an active instrument of governance and justice.

British Columbia became a State of the Dominion in 1871, Prince Edward Island in 1873, and the newer Provinces have been colonised and organised in due course.

Only Newfoundland (with its natural maritime appendage of Labrador) has preferred to remain a separate self-governing Colony, the dispute between the Island and the Dominion as to the Labrador frontier being settled, on appeal, by the Privy Council (1927).

(ii) AUSTRALIA

The historical relations of England with Australia are in interesting contrast to the Canadian record. Australia has been English from the beginning and without foreign competition. That beginning dates so recently as 1770, although Dutch geographers had even in Tudor times announced the existence of an Austral (or southern) continent, while occasionally a storm-driven sailor had come in sight of the mysterious coasts,¹ and the English captain Dampier had in the time of William and Mary explored the uninviting northern shores.

Australia, moreover, offered that desideratum of the modern world—an empty country, of immense size and accessible all round by sea. Its virtual rediscovery in 1770 was primarily due to science. The Royal Society desired to send astronomers to the Pacific to observe the transit of Venus, and the Admiralty fitted out for them the *Endeavour* and appointed as commander Captain James Cook, already known as the intrepid surveyor of the St. Lawrence for Admiral Saunders, and of the Newfoundland waters for Palliser. There were draughtsmen and botanists on board (the famous Banks for one), and Cook himself was particularly directed to survey and chart the lands and seas.

The *Endeavour* set sail in 1768 for the Pacific, via Cape Horn, and after the astronomers had duly taken their observations at Tahiti, proceeded to chart the coasts of New Zealand, which, said Cook, are to the Pacific hemisphere as the British Isles to the Atlantic.

Next, Tasmania was carefully observed and then the east coast of Australia, from "Botany Bay" as the enthusiastic naturalists

¹ Tasman, Van Diemen, Zealand are Dutch names and Torres Spanish.

named it, to Cape York, named by Cook after his native county. Here he formally set up the Union Jack and took possession of the land he had surveyed for King George (1770). The configuration of the S.E. coast had at first reminded him of the coast of Wales as seen from the Bristol Channel, so he named it *New South Wales*.

When the weather-beaten vessel triumphantly reached home, after her three years' expedition, no immediate proposals were brought forward to make use of her rich store of new knowledge, and the American war soon fixed maritime attention exclusively upon the Atlantic. But after the peace of 1783 a peculiar need directed the attention of the Home Secretary to the lately charted shores. The convicts who had for two centuries been transported to North America as slaves for the colonists could now be sent thither no longer. What was to be done with them? The idea that exile was the natural punishment for criminals not quite bad enough to be hanged, but too bad to leave at large, had been taken for granted from Saxon times; it was the *outlawry* of the Middle Ages. The experiment was therefore made (1787) of sending a shipful of the *convicts* to the distant and empty shores of New South Wales. Captain Phillip successfully conducted the first expedition and named the little town he built beside Port Jackson, after the Home Secretary, Sydney.

During the next ten years the convict ships regularly carried to Botany Bay, or other assigned stations, their human cargo of suffering and despair, with costly store-ships following after them, for the land provided little food nor could the zealous officials and naturalists for a long time find out how to convey seeds across a tropical ocean or how to make them grow in New South Wales. Animals, too, were difficult to keep alive during the eight or nine months' voyage, and though cattle and sheep were at last domesticated, the prisoners and their keepers often had to eke out their stores from home with kangaroo meat. Sometimes starvation was so near that a humane governor would allow the felons to go hunting. There was some lull in the number of convict ships during the Peninsular War, when Government turned numbers of gaol-birds into the army, but with peace they came again more thickly than before. The movement in England against lavish executions meant more transportation, and there were, also, some voluntary colonists.

When a convict's time was served it was practically impossible for him to return to England, so he must make a rough living at farming. By no means all convicts were degraded men; for stealing handkerchiefs, or roots from the fields, for poaching pheasants, for various kinds of fraud, and even for begging, men might be sentenced to transportation. Until 1815 the time-expired convicts were the only free colonists.

The Home Government could not directly rule a place so far away and relied on the men on the spot. But Government was

sufficiently well read to safeguard liberty according to the best theory by a careful "separation of legislative and executive" (which, indeed, Continental philosophers had proclaimed to be the grand secret of the English Constitution). The successive Governors of New South Wales were naval captains, accustomed to wield authority, and they were supplied with an armed constabulary in the 'New South Wales Corps,' commanded by army officers. The latter were practically exiled for life and were naturally not the most valuable type of men. They found a little consolation in quarrelling with the Governor, or in making money by a trade in spirits, distilled by themselves and sold to the settlers. They easily made the Governor's rule impossible, and as it took nearly two years to receive from home a reply to complaints, anarchy usually reigned, till at last the military deposed their ruler. The Corps seized and imprisoned Governor Bligh (of the *Bounty*,¹ and once a companion of Cook) and decreed 'martial law' for the settlement. This was their last success; Lord Liverpool sent out Major-General Macquarie (1809-21), with whom begins the advance of Australia. He brought his regiment with him, shipped the N.S.W. Corps home, and established a rough and impartial justice. Like some ancient Roman general, he rebuilt Sydney and then cut a great road through the mountain forest to the grassy plains far beyond, where agriculture could flourish, and there founded Bathurst. So that when at last voluntary free immigrants began to arrive, he could distribute them on portions of land which could be tilled.

All this was done at the cost of the British Exchequer, but Macquarie secured the beginning of a revenue by charging small rents or purchase money. Unhappily his heavy expenditure and the complaints of large sheep farmers that he sacrificed their interests to those of the small settlers induced his recall. Like Warren Hastings, he had to suffer official rebuke, but he had founded his new system.

The stream of free colonists had set in as soon as Waterloo opened the prospect of settled peace. The principal enterprise which attracted them, and which established the vital economic link between Australia and England, had already been initiated before Macquarie's reign by one of the military officers, Captain Macarthur. He had conducted sheep-farming on the grass plains so profitably that during the time of the Peninsular War he had notified the Home Government that New South Wales could supply English manufacturers with large quantities of wool. As the war had nearly cut off the European supply, Macarthur's intelligence was extremely welcome. He himself was rewarded with a grant of rich land, and the attention of intending emigrants was directed to this new and, as was presumed, easy road to wealth.

The sheep-farmers and agriculturists who now poured into

¹ *The Mutiny of the Bounty* is a classic of English sea adventure.

Australia were no hopeless paupers. Many had capital and credit to supply themselves with necessities and animals, others built up fortunes by sheer determination. Within six years from Governor Macquarie's departure New South Wales was a self-supporting colony, and after 1840 convicts were no longer sent thither.

It is not possible here to relate the thrilling story of Australian exploration. The extraordinarily rapid growth of population was recognised by the Home Government by a continual extension of the powers of self-government. The embryo of a Constitution was given by Act of Parliament in 1822. The Governor was to be assisted (or hampered) by a Council, and a body of judges were appointed exempt from his control. The law of New South Wales was declared to be that of England (as then reformed). Ten years later the Council was turned into a Parliament, though the ministers were at first responsible only to the Governor, who retained also the responsibility of awarding grants of land, about which there were persistent disputes between the graziers, who were rich wholesale merchants, and the tillers of small farms. It looked like a reproduction of that competition of sheep with arable which in past ages had so disastrously agitated England. On the other hand, the export by the large graziers of wool and, as soon as science made it possible, of mutton, sent enormous supplies to England which, for multitudes, meant both better and cheaper clothing and food.

The different provinces of Australia were for the most part colonised from the coast (like our ancient Saxon Kingdoms) except for Queensland, which was first populated by wanderers from N.S. Wales. Consequently the Home Government established each, as quickly as possible, as a separate Colony—West Australia (1829), South Australia (1836), New Zealand (1839) and Victoria (1850). The younger States were still, therefore, in the earlier stages of political development, while in N.S. Wales the more advanced system of Representative Government had already begun, in 1842. The system was rapidly extended to the other provinces.

In consequence of this firm settlement of lawful government the sensational discoveries of gold (from 1851), which suddenly doubled the population, did not produce the barbarous effects seen in California. Australia, like Canada, possessed both the will and power to control emergencies.

The results perhaps provided a convenient distribution of emigrants, the gold-fields of the United States offering the best chances to individual physical force, Australia and British Columbia promising more to trained co-operative energies.

XVII

THE BRITISH EMPIRE. (B) AFRICA—WEST AND NORTH

(i) WEST AFRICA

AFRICA, in the nineteenth century, occupied the position which America had filled in the two previous centuries, as the land of opportunities, the vast unknown of gold and adventure. The very dangers of the 'Dark continent,' so much more sinister than ever had been America, fascinated adventurers, who, in turn, enticed commercial men into fitting out expeditions by tales of the stores of wealth which might be found among the savage men and beasts, the poisonous forests and deserts, of Africa.

Wealth now included many kinds of natural plunder other than gold and precious stones. Raw material for manufactures had become the prime need of all countries which had embraced the factory system of civilisation according to the British pattern. Manufacture by machinery and wholesale export was assumed to be the necessary basis of the modern State. All the countries of Europe were copying England as fast as possible; the United States of America were competing vigorously, while India and other Asiatic countries and the independent Dominions of the British Crown were eagerly looking in the same direction.

The Americans had their own enormous stocks of Nature's treasure, Russia had a good deal, and Germany also some, if not enough for her ambitions; but Great Britain and most other European States possessed little or none. There ensued "the grab for Africa" on the part of the European nations.

The epic hero of African exploration, though not actually the earliest, is Mungo Park, whose extraordinary journeys (1795-1805) had early fired the enthusiasm of the British Colonial Office. To a minister the commercial resources of Africa provided the lure. But to explorers and men of science a fascination resided in the tales of immense rivers flowing none knew whence or whither. The Niger, in mid career, had been seen by explorers entering from the western coast, and the mouth of the Congo was known to sea-faring men further east. To determine whether the Niger was the Congo, whether either was a fiction, or if both were tributaries of the Nile, offered a fit task for the intrepid, and a society of scientific men (afterwards the Royal Geographical Society) for many years fitted out expeditions to solve this mystery. If one explorer

could navigate down (the Niger) while another started up (the Congo) it might be hoped that they would meet. And in the meantime the French were exploring from the Mediterranean side. Many more gallant adventurers, English and French, launched themselves into Central Africa than ever returned home again, until at length Lander succeeded in keeping alive till the Niger bore his skiff triumphantly out into the sea, in 1830.

On the track of these early explorers followed a series of equally heroic missionaries, bent on carrying Christianity to the tribal 'kingdoms' of the vast Niger territories. An instinctive friendliness quickly sprang up between the English pioneers and the numerous and courageous tribes now known as the Haussas.

But at the mouths of the Niger, where the traders wanted to conduct business, native anarchy and a pestilential atmosphere provided conditions too appalling for even bold men to face.

It was the enthusiasm of a Liverpool shipbuilding firm, the Lairds, which at last obtained the sanction and co-operation of the Government for a prolonged expedition, including navigators, doctors and a few picked officers, which made its way far up the Niger in a vessel specially designed for the river and carrying both sails and a screw propeller. With them went the great native missionary, Samuel Crowther, afterwards Bishop of the Niger. The aim of the Englishmen was clearly announced to be commercial, not the acquisition of territory. This the native chiefs understood and they welcomed both the establishment of 'factories' (trading posts) on the river and the Christian preaching of Crowther.

For twenty years Lairds in Liverpool, Doctor Baikie, British Consul on the Niger, and the Bishop maintained the friendly connection between the natives and the English, but the development of a regular commerce was slow, and after their day the Government, in 1868, relinquished the enterprise and left the Niger for some time to the rivalry of France and Germany.

But in 1877 the third stage in the civilisation of the Niger countries was inaugurated by the soldier-statesman, Sir George Goldie, "our (first) representative in Africa of the Indian Empire-making men." In the course of some thirty years Goldie succeeded in amalgamating the various English trading interests in one, the *Royal Niger Company*, and in obtaining from Government the necessary charter (1881-6). Opposition came from French merchants, the German Government, and a few conscientious objectors in the second Gladstone Cabinet. But the last were persuaded, and the first were attracted by very lavish terms into the Company, so that when the Berlin Conference of 1884-5 entered upon the African question, with a German proviso for the maintenance of all existing flags upon the Niger, Goldie was able to report that the only flag was the Union Jack. Subsequent treaties with Germany (1886, 1893) and with France (1890 to 1909) marked out precise limits between the 'spheres' of the three Powers, and amid this international

pressure the Niger Company was constrained to surrender (like its forerunner the East India Company) its political powers to the Imperial Government and subside into a simple commercial company.

(ii) EGYPT

International competition in West and Central Africa was allied with international jealousies with regard to Egypt.

During the modern period of history, as during the mediæval, what the majority of Europeans understood by 'Egypt' was solely Lower Egypt, accessible from the Mediterranean. Being a part of the Turkish Empire, Egypt had to be remembered in every discussion of the Eastern Question, from the Crusades to our own day, and the importance which Napoleon had shown it might possess became still more obvious when the Suez Canal was constructed and became the highway to India.

But geographically and politically Egypt—the land of the Nile—extended far beyond the ken of French and Turkish armies or British navies, and the ambition of its sovereign, the Khedive, rose higher in proportion as the feebleness of his suzerain, the Sultan, became more and more evident. One Khedive aimed at annexing Syria, another at ruling the Soudan; at all times they squandered money. Sometimes the Egyptians posed as 'Nationalists,' seeking independence of Turkey; at others they proclaimed hatred to all foreigners and especially to Christians; this applies to the upper class Egyptians, the ignorant fellaheen did not count.

In the 'eighties ¹ a racial cry for freedom may be said to have become a fashion in political circles: Ireland, Poland, Alsace-Lorraine, Serbia, Greece, India, the Transvaal, kept the welkin ringing with claims and protests, and if diplomatists could have reconciled the aspirations of Egypt with the claims of the Sultan and of the financiers they would gladly have done so. International diplomacy, however, found no better success in such a case than the British Parliament.

If it had but seemed feasible to leave Turkey and Egypt to fight out their differences the Sultan and the Khedive would probably have found themselves pretty evenly matched. Each had an army only partially under control, each was deep in debt, and neither had a fleet. But both were well aware of the jealousies of other States and were adepts in playing them off against each other.

The Khedives in the nineteenth century were of the family of that Mehemet and Ibrahim whose interference in Greece had brought about the incident of Navarino. Their successor, Ismail, had endeavoured to strengthen himself by enlisting Europeans as officers and administrators, but his personal extravagances left

¹ "The yearning 'eighties" is no bad epithet—though properly alluding to the then dramatic and artistic fashions.

Egypt burdened with a public Debt, an ambitious policy and a dangerous army. A *national debt* was supposed by Orientals to be the golden spell of Western finance; it enabled a ruler to obtain loans from financiers who looked for dividends payable by taxes on subjects. But the bondholders of this new Debt had insisted on the supervision of Egyptian finance by a Board, named by the great Powers, and as the two States most concerned were Great Britain and France, the celebrated *Dual Control* was set up—an Englishman supervised the collection of revenue and a Frenchman its expenditure (1876). The shareholders in the Debt received their interest and the Sultan his tribute, but the Khedive found his extravagance sadly curtailed. When he tried to abolish this unpleasant control he was deposed and his son Tewfik set up (1879–92) as a more cultivated person whom the British Cabinet considered worthy to preside over a *constitutional* government. Gladstone and his emissary, Lord Dufferin, the famous ambassador, duly compiled a Constitution for Egypt, and with it conferred also the more important boon of a great administrator—Sir Evelyn Baring, afterwards Lord Cromer, who for over twenty years was the virtual ruler of the country, as the Khedive's Adviser, with the simple title of *British Agent*.

An army revolt, under Arabi Pasha, all but dethroned Tewfik at the outset of his reign and produced widespread anarchy, culminating in a massacre of Europeans at Alexandria (recently proclaimed an international port). The British and French fleets hastened up, and the former bombarded the fortifications (July 1882). This proceeding was loudly denounced, but as it seemed impossible to leave Europeans at the mercy of mobs and mutineers, and as the Sultan, France, and Italy all declined to take any action, British troops under Sir Garnet Wolseley were sent to restore order, which they effectively did by crushing Arabi at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir (September 1882). The fact that England alone had cared—or dared—to interpose in Egyptian anarchy made an end of the 'Dual Control.' It was obvious that British protection alone kept the Khedive on his throne and made Lower Egypt safe for Europeans. Hence Great Britain was, by other nations, held responsible for the condition of Egypt and blamed for its abuses. The position was doubly unacceptable to the Gladstone Cabinet, which sought to withdraw our troops as soon as possible, and expressly declared that for the Soudan it declined all responsibility.

Cromer's decision for his sovereign, the Khedive, was that, having hardly any revenue and an army in mutiny, he must relinquish the ambitious policy of governing the Soudan and that Egyptian resources must all be devoted to the long task of attaining financial stability as the first step to any other reforms. But before the Khedive could abandon the Soudan he must cause his troops to evacuate the fortified places they were holding there. Like Roman armies of old, they were established as a series of military

colonies, surrounded by their families. The Soudan was permanently in rebellion against the Khedive, being at this time animated by a fanatic of the usual Mohammedan stamp, known as the *Mahdi*, who had proclaimed a 'holy war.' For the Khedive's garrisons to march their endless way back to Egypt would be merely to invite massacre.

There followed the extraordinary episode of General Gordon's mission.

Charles Gordon was a hero-fanatic of extraordinary prowess, a blend of Viking and Puritan, an evangelical crusader. He had already won fame as a brilliant soldier and tireless explorer in the Crimean War and in China, Armenia, Egypt and elsewhere. Exempt, as it appeared, from most human weaknesses, he was devoid of timidity or prudence, cared nothing for comfort, dignity, food, or life itself, but only to accomplish whatever business he had taken in hand, whether subduing an enemy or rescuing orphan boys from the London streets; his work was to him always a sacred Mission. He exercised a unique ascendancy over non-European natives. In China he assumed command, like some old-time adventurer, of the Chinese Imperial army and put down the famous Taiping rebellion (1863). He used to lead his troops himself, carrying only a little cane: they thought this to be his magic wand, and followed him in confidence that miracles were being worked for them. After these exploits "Chinese Gordon"—"the Bible Englishman"—was universally famous as half-magician, half-saint, and was besought to undertake difficult tasks of government all over the world—in India, Cape Colony, the Belgian Congo, and, finally, Egypt, at the request of both the Khedive and the British Cabinet.

The Cabinet were bent on withdrawing from Egyptian responsibilities, and it looked as if the expedition of one enthusiast, credited with ability to work miracles, would be easier and less costly than the further employment of British troops and ships. Already the Khedive's army, under an English general, Hicks Pasha, had been overwhelmed by the Mahdi's followers (1883).

What the Cabinet ignored was that, though Gordon was officially in the service of the Khedive, all the world and the Africans knew him to be an English officer, and that he himself could not forget this.

His mission in 1884 was, as the Khedive's governor-general of the Soudan, to bring away from it several thousands of Egyptians, his own post being at Khartoum. He succeeded in despatching large numbers down the Nile, but instead of going with them persisted in holding Khartoum for ten months as the frontier fort between Egypt and barbarism, detesting the idea of abandoning the Soudan and all Central Africa to savagery and the slave-traders. The one thing that he could not do was to obey orders which he disliked. As it was quite clear that civilisation was now receding, the native chiefs quickly made their terms with the Mahdi, while

Gordon's more faithful subjects were massacred or perished of famine.

It was Gordon's habit to act upon his own judgment without regard to the policy of his superiors, and on discovering the realities of the task assigned to him he addressed urgent appeals to Cairo and London for the succours which he had been warned he must not expect, and set himself to hold his position instead of retreating from it.

But the Khedive was unable, and the British Cabinet (the second Gladstone Ministry) was for many months unwilling to undertake so difficult an enterprise. A correspondent of *The Times*, however, was present at Khartoum and contrived to forward reports which roused the strongest popular interest. This was echoed in the House of Commons so vigorously that Gladstone was brought to sanction an expedition under Lord Wolseley to rescue Gordon. Even then long delays were interposed; the Mahdi's information was good, and he cleverly cut off, piecemeal, Gordon's officers and messengers, only making his final attack upon Khartoum when he learned that the Anglo-Egyptian forces were actually approaching.

The relieving column had, of course, to fight its way for a thousand miles, the life of the first general, Sir Herbert Stewart, being sacrificed, besides a large number of both the Queen's and the Khedive's troops. During Cromer's rule a reformed Egyptian army had been trained by Sir Evelyn Wood with a handful of picked officers (including Wingate, Grenfell, Kitchener, Smith-Dorrien, Wynne). Lord Charles Beresford and other naval officers co-operated in wonderful boat-work on the Nile. The whole expedition was most skilfully conducted, and the news that it had at last reached Khartoum only to find Gordon dead, and dead in vain, stirred profound grief all over the country, from the Queen to the most simple, mingled with strong indignation against the Cabinet which was believed to have made use of him and deserted him.

XVIII

THE BRITISH EMPIRE. (C) SOUTH AFRICA

THE British establishment in South Africa was always conditioned by a twofold problem. In the first place (and offering some resemblance to the Canadian position in the eighteenth century) there was already a body of European inhabitants who were unwilling to be merged in a British colony. In the second place, there was a non-white population, not sparse and dwindling (like the American Red-Indians) nor of a low and negligible type (like the Australian blacks), but numerous, possessed of civilisations of their own, often warlike and intelligent, and reinforced in numbers out of the depths of the populous continent behind them. How far, and for how long, could white colonists create and keep a white man's country in such a position?

Long before our acquisition of it, the Cape of Good Hope, or rather Table Bay beside it, had become a station on the sea route to India.

The Dutch East India Company took possession of it and established a colony for the sake of their vessels, which was reinforced by a few hundred Huguenots expelled from France by Louis XIV, to whom the Dutch offered homes in their colony. English ships going to India regularly touched here, but it was not till the Revolution war that the tangle of Dutch and French politics brought in the flag of Great Britain. The Stadtholder (who led the pro-English party at home and fled to London on the French annexation of Holland) authorised the English expedition, which seized it before the French could arrange to do so, and at the Peace of 1814, when we handed back the Dutch East India islands, we retained the Cape (as well as a tract of Guiana in South America) for maritime and commercial reasons, and paid as compensation a price of six millions.

Little was known in 1814 about the country, which was understood to be healthy, probably fertile and very scantily peopled.

In fact the Dutch settlers had long since withdrawn from the coast and become cattle-breeders in the grassy country. These Boers (farmers) had developed, in the course of a century and a half, a unique pastoral society, its principles based upon their traditional interpretation of the Pentateuch (which they always called *The Bible*). On the simple assumption that they were the

Chosen People, they applied to themselves with religious conviction the more exhilarating parts of Jewish history and prophecy and regarded, and treated, all others as Egyptians, Philistines and Amalekites. The occupation of cattle-grazing and the institution of negro slavery, which they inherited from their first settlement in 1652, proved highly suitable to *The Bible*, the country and the climate, and remained the chief features of their social economy. The submissive Hottentots were easily enslaved, and mastery over all the enslaved races, including large numbers of their own half-castes, was maintained by harshness and superiority of weapons.

In 1814 and 1834 the Dutch, or Boer, people were still living as in 1660. Their principles were those of seventeenth-century Calvinism confined to the narrowest channels. Their practices were highly edifying to the antiquary, as reproducing a pastoral and even semi-nomadic age, without books or education, government or taxation, almost without commerce or money, each homestead a self-sufficing unit, placed by preference out of sight of the smoke of the next farmhouse: a paradise of complacency for strong, courageous men, supported by the submission of women and slave labour. The whole was maintained in sanctified stagnation by a carefully preserved ignorance, contact with the outer world being esteemed almost impious but for one remarkable exception: they all possessed fire-arms of the best patterns, and the import of ammunition and of coffee was the sole necessity for recourse to a seaport.

To this artificially primitive people the tidings that they and their country had been transferred to the British Crown came as an insult; the announcement that the British Government did not recognise distinctions of race and colour among free men was scandalous; worst of all was the 'tyrannical' law which in 1834 emancipated slaves. Of the compensation for slaves granted by Parliament and paid by the British public, the share of South Africa was but $1\frac{1}{4}$ millions, and the jobbery of the arrangements in London for the payment of it diverted a large slice from the Dutch farmers to financial agents.

The Boers' acquaintance with the English had been till then confined to a slight but exasperating intercourse with a few missionaries among the native tribes, or with the English colonists who founded Port Elizabeth in 1820 and Port Natal in 1834, but was supplemented by old legends depicting the English as arrogant and rapacious bullies.

The Colony of 5,000 English, sent out by the Government in 1820, was of the old typical character—plenty of artisans but not enough agriculturists. They did not interfere at all with the Boers, but stayed on their own lands, and in spite of ten years of hardships founded a permanent nucleus of civilised agriculture and town life.

It seems that the missionaries, having espoused the cause of



THE TROOPS CROSSING THE GREAT FISH RIVER IN PURSUIT OF KAFIRS AND CATTLE, 1850.

FROM A SKETCH BY SIR HARRY DARELL, BART.

facing p. 160.

their native converts with perhaps keener sympathy than observation, were responsible for some erroneous impressions entertained by the Government and the public at home as to their intelligence and rights.¹ This produced a series of 'treaties' made by Government agents with native chiefs who were imagined to be territorial monarchs. To deal with temporary savage chiefs as equals of British officers and almost of the Crown was not only a cruel snare to their ignorance, but an implied insult and a real peril to the Dutch farmers scattered in the vast back-lands. The Kaffir War (1834-5), which was largely provoked by the Boers themselves, was all the more fearful for the mistaken native confidence and confirmed the Boer hatred of 'hypocritical' missionaries and 'godless' England.

Equally foolish was the continual interference of Colonial Secretaries in London with the Governors sent to administer the Cape Colony, which resulted in native tribes learning, first, that they had become British subjects, and then, that this status was withdrawn from them. Similar vacillation, but with more explosive effect, marked the Government's treatment of the Boers.

Long ago, in the eighteenth century, the cattle-farmers had evaded the jurisdiction of the Dutch Company by *trekking*, or driving away their herds and conveying their families on enormous ox-wagons to distant pasture grounds. Some 10,000 of them now made a similar migration northwards, thinking to escape the restraints of English laws and moral standards (1836-40).

Naturally the natives, who required the vast pastoral wilderness for their own herds, resisted the Boer invasion with a combination of guile and courage more successful than the devotees of the Pentateuch had expected, and by them termed 'treachery.'

Fire and slaughter were next carried by the natives into the English colonial districts, and the English Governors with their sparse forts and thin regiments could hardly see their way to protecting the seaboard colonists alone and relinquishing to native fury all the inland farms. The Boer *trek* had directly drawn the hornets' nests upon the whole of South Africa.

There were, in consequence, Kaffir wars every few years from 1836 to 1854. Sir Benjamin D'Urban and Sir Harry Smith, with skill equalled only by the courage of their scanty troops, foiled every invasion, but D'Urban's admirable plans for future security were negated by the Colonial Secretary, Sir C. Grant (Lord Glenelg).

Those English at home who paid any attention to the far-off continent held divergent opinions. On the one hand, the 'picturesque' appearance and biblical language of the trekkers excited a kind of artistic sympathy. The kind of sentiment which could see in the Southern States of the American Union nothing but a slave system, could at the same time behold in the Boers a sect of

¹ Mrs. Jellyby in *Bleak House* is the immortal caricature.

primitive 'Christians' fleeing from military oppression. On the other hand, the supporters of the missionaries urged a drastic abolition of South African slavery. No Colonial Secretary could please both sets, but to please them by turns was fatal.

The Boer migration placed the Melbourne Cabinet in a dilemma. They were anxious to economise, and therefore to reduce military establishments, and therefore to discourage colonial expansion. They even refused to recognise Port Natal as a colony (1834). Nevertheless it was impossible either to leave British settlers totally unprotected, as if they were on some uncharted island, or to allow British subjects, even if aliens by birth, to stir up trouble which must involve other colonists, and in the end the Government.

When, then, in 1835, Pretorius led a fresh Boer *trek* into the region just behind Port Natal, founded a farmers' town, Pietermaritzburg, and proclaimed a Republic, the Governor refused to recognise the trekkers as a political entity. "Her Majesty could not acknowledge the independence of her own subjects," he said. But the Home Government remained impartially silent until a cruel raid made by Boers on a native tribe compelled intervention.

The Conservatives were then in office and were reversing the Whig policy. The Colonial Secretary, Stanley,¹ directed the recognition and organisation of Natal as a Colony with a proper administration (1843). No restraints were to be laid upon the Dutch graziers except the two fundamental British rules of no slavery and no legal or political distinctions on account of race, colour or creed. These two rules, however, were precisely what the Boers called tyranny, and when the newly-instituted Land Courts awarded some portions of the wilderness to the natives, another *trek* northwards began.

This time Sir Harry Smith at once (1847) proclaimed the Queen's sovereignty over all the lands between the Orange and Vaal rivers, known as the Orange River Sovereignty, Colony, or State. The Boers resisted, fought, and were defeated (1848).

Three years later, when a serious Kaffir rising absorbed the whole of the scanty British troops, the versatile Pretorius presented a demand for a recognition of independence as the price of Boer neutrality (1851). The local Governor was helpless and by the *Sand River Convention* (1852) admitted the independence of those who had gone beyond the Vaal river. This was sanctioned by Russell's Whig Ministry, glad to wash its hands of Smith's annexation, and shortly after Aberdeen's Ministry declared the Orange River State also independent, in spite of protests from many of the settlers there against being thus 'abandoned' (1854).

During their two centuries of isolation among the natives the Boers had reproduced another feature of antiquity, the immemorial tactics of defence against attack by larger numbers. They would draw round their party a circular barrier, in their case a 'laager'

¹ Afterwards 14th Earl of Derby and Prime Minister.

of wagons (like the Hussites), place their families within, and shoot down the attackers. Their weapons made them, indeed, superior to the Hussites, or the Saxons of the German Henry the Fowler, or the Brythons of our own prehistoric camps, but the principle was the same. Moreover, in marksmanship and horsemanship, the necessary conditions of survival in the wilderness, the Boers are to be ranked with the best cavalry known to history. They kept a very simple system of order in fight, were unhampered by infantry and possessed absolute self-confidence.

In 1854, then, South Africa was divided among two Dutch republics and three British colonies—the Cape Colony, Kaffraria and Natal. In the Cape a representative Council and House of Assembly was erected (1853), intended by the Home Government to be a ladder to complete self-government (duly established in 1872). The Boers were to be left to themselves and to deal as they chose with natives beyond the bounds of the three colonies.

Thus proposed the Home Government. But the problem before Sir George Grey, Governor of Cape Colony (1854–61), was that which has always faced the protagonists of Law and Order, from Julius Cæsar to Napoleon and from Wessex to Hindustan—how to draw a frontier-line between civilisation and anarchy.

Though five political divisions were delimited there were four races—British, Dutch, Yellow native and Black native—interspersed in all of them : everywhere the natives outnumbered the white men, and in Natal by twelve to one. The Governments of the Transvaal and The Orange Free State exercised a merely nominal authority and were distracted by anarchy and native wars, while the very numerous kindred of both Dutch and Basutos who dwelt within the English colonies were keenly interested in the racial contests. From the Orange State came some overtures for a re-annexation under the Crown, while the principal Basuto chief urged the petition : “ Let me and my people rest and live under the large folds of the flag of England.” With this latter object a treaty was drawn up with the Orange State, though it entailed a protest from the obdurate Transvaal Boers, who cried out that it was a breach of their independence treaties.

Just at the same time came the first announcement of the discovery of diamonds near the Orange River (1867) and of gold in the Transvaal, so that an influx of adventurers was to be anticipated, pouring through the English colonies to the founts of possible wealth in the lawless ‘ republics ’ on the edge of savagery.

Sir George Grey, therefore, advised a federation of the five white districts, for which the President of the Orange State, the sagacious Brand, was quite willing. But the statesmanlike Grey was rebuked from Downing Street, recalled by Lord Granville and his advice totally disregarded, though he was sent out again by the next Colonial Secretary. All that could be done was to bring the diamond district under the Crown and Cape Colony, at the desire of the

local native chief and with the unwilling consent of the Orange State, lubricated by a payment of £90,000. Lord Kimberley, Colonial Secretary, after whom the diamond-mining town was named, now constructed the scheme of Responsible Government in Cape Colony (1872). The Governor, as in all similar cases, continued to be named by the Crown, but his ministers became responsible to the Cape Parliament. The Governor also held a supreme, but ill-defined, office as High Commissioner for all British South Africa.

From 1870 dates the rapid development of South Africa on modern commercial lines, due very largely to the mining in both Kimberley and Johannesburg, the gold-miners' town in the Transvaal.

The ill-will of that republic to the English was now peculiarly dangerous to all white South Africa because of the extraordinary military power of the Zulus, who under two remarkable chiefs had attained to so high an organisation that they held an acknowledged supremacy over the other tribes, and were in the 'seventies thirsting for a richer harvest of bloodshed and plunder. The arrogant contempt with which the Boers treated the Zulus was only too likely to draw down upon them a tide of destruction which certainly would not pause at the Vaal River.

At this point a fresh element of disintegration was introduced. The Conservative Colonial Secretary, Lord Carnarvon, one of the most upright, amiable and incompetent of men, had become enamoured of federation as exhibited in the Dominion of Canada (1867) and was bent on distinguishing himself by creating a like union in South Africa.

He sent to Natal Sir Theophilus Shepstone, already famed there for his powerful influence over native tribes, and gave him large authority, including a 'dormant commission' (only to be announced if he considered it necessary) to inspect the Transvaal and even to annex it if he believed it right. Sir Bartle Frere was sent at the same time as Governor to the Cape Colony.

A general enthusiasm and pride had by this time grown up at home with respect to a closer union of "the Empire upon which the sun never sets." But zeal unfortunately outran discretion in London. The Federation of Canada had been originally a Canadian movement; in South Africa the Colonial Secretary was thrusting the proposal forward with a persistence (1874-80) which provoked a reminder from Cape Colony that it was now a self-governing State. Unwarned, Carnarvon still tried to do the thing himself by summoning a Conference in London, to which neither Cape Colony nor the Transvaal would send representatives. Finally, he caused Parliament to pass a permissive Act to empower the colonies to amalgamate, and despatched a personal friend and successful literary man, J. A. Froude, to lecture to South Africa on its proper interests.

In the midst of this tactless fuss Shepstone had found the Transvaal to be in a condition of such anarchy as endangered its neighbours, and with the goodwill of some of its inhabitants he proclaimed its annexation, as the sole chance of preserving the whites from destruction, in January 1877.

In Cape Colony, at the same moment, Frere was busy organising defences against the Kaffir war of 1877-8, which was immediately followed by the long dreaded Zulu war (1878).

King Cetewayo's *impis* (or regiments) surrounded and cut to pieces a small British force at Isandhlwana, but the heroic defence of Rorke's Drift by a handful of soldiers under Lieutenants Bromhead and Chard stemmed the invasion and saved the farms of Natal from fire and slaughter.

In the end our troops penetrated to the Zulu country and capital and sent Cetewayo ¹ a prisoner to England.

The general, Lord Chelmsford, had at first made some mistakes which cost valuable lives. He was superseded by Sir Garnet Wolseley, who was also made High Commissioner. Wolseley thought he had established order among natives and Boers and then returned home (1880). The new Colonial Secretary recalled Frere also.

The Conservative Ministry fell in April 1880, and Wolseley's remarkable Report on the condition of South Africa was handed to the Gladstone Cabinet. He urged holding all the territories firmly, saying that the development of the mineral workings in the Transvaal in the near future must attract a large British population, when the Boers would form but a small minority: "would it not therefore be a very near-sighted policy to recede now?"

But determined as the Boers were to cling to their Mosaic aloofness, their leaders had learned to read English newspapers, wherein they studied Mr. Gladstone's popular speeches denouncing the Conservative (Shepstone's) annexation of the Transvaal. They expected, therefore, to receive their independence back, especially as the Zulus were now no longer a danger. When, then, they learned that the Liberal Cabinet intended to maintain the annexation, they indignantly resolved to repudiate it themselves.

In December 1880 they proclaimed the independence of the Transvaal, took up arms, besieged the small British garrisons, and invaded Natal. The new commander and High Commissioner, Sir George Colley, marched to meet them, but suffered several rebuffs in Natal culminating in a disaster on Majuba Hill, where his little force of less than 600 was cut to pieces and himself killed (February 1881).

During this time the overtures of the Boer emissary, Paul Kruger, were being favourably considered by Gladstone. Intent on economy and reducing British liabilities, he had already directed Colley to

¹ Or Ketchwayo.

offer the Boers independence in "purely Dutch" districts while Great Britain retained "native" districts, and this had been communicated to them before the fight at Majuba, which in fact was their reply. The distinction drawn did not in reality exist. But the gallant and able Sir Evelyn Wood, who had just reached the country with reinforcements, was allowed no time or choice to act but ordered to arrange terms. The Transvaal was to receive independence, under the 'suzerainty' of the Crown, which was to control foreign relations. The terms were accepted (March 1881).

Gladstone had determined, and publicly declared, that the policy of concession to the Boers and the withdrawal of our troops ought not to be altered merely by the incident of a lost battle. But the arrogance of the Boers and the fury and shame of the English in South Africa were unaffected by speeches in London. Neither side ever doubted that the 'Retrocession' had been won by the battle of Majuba Hill.

The case was the more pointed because the War Office had already despatched 10,000 troops and Sir Frederick Roberts to the Cape. In twenty-four hours he received his recall and returned home at once.

The Retrocession was drawn up formally by the *Convention of Pretoria*, 1881. 'Suzerainty,' a vague term, fruitful of wars even in feudal times, would, of course, as a keen critic observed, be interpreted in England to mean 'sovereignty' and in South Africa to mean nothing.

Kruger was now President of the Transvaal Republic, where the great deposits of gold began to be worked, from 1885, not by the Boers but by new immigrants, British and others. He constructed, with much skill, a legal system to secure the lion's share of the profits for the Boer rulers alone.

The foreign miners (termed *Uitlanders*) were allowed to live and work in Johannesburg, the new city which they built near Pretoria, but not to acquire civic rights. Enormous taxes were laid on them; the courts of justice, and commercial, police and educational regulations were so manipulated as to subject them to robbery and insult. The Boers armed themselves to the teeth but forbade the *Uitlanders* to have any weapons. Not all the miners were English, but the majority and the best organised were and looked to the British High Commissioner for some protection, which, however, under the Convention of Pretoria, he was unable to provide. In vain did he and the Home Government urge Kruger to allow them to become citizens.

During the 'eighties and 'nineties the defiance of Great Britain by the Transvaal Boers formed a factor in the European competition for Africa. Not annexations but "spheres of influence" were now coveted by Germany, France and Belgium, and vast

districts were being assigned for exploitation, but not necessarily for administration. By agreement with Great Britain, in 1886, Germany secured a large "sphere" in East Africa. But a private Scottish merchant, Mackinnon, obtained an equivalent district for British exploitation by founding the *Imperial British East Africa Company* (charter, 1888) and obtaining a grant from the Sultan of Zanzibar, who claimed to be overlord of the country. At the same time a party of explorers in the region of the equatorial Great Lakes was permitted to conclude treaties with the native chiefs there, which were very soon taken over by the East Africa Company.

It was with much annoyance that the slower Germans beheld these English operations; for whether purely commercial or not, it was unlikely that they would be abandoned. President Kruger was aiming at a secret understanding with Germany and at providing the Transvaal with access to the sea outside British territory. The ancient Portuguese territory of Mozambique ended not very far from the Transvaal frontier at Delagoa Bay, the southern shores of which were not settled. As Portugal declined to allow Great Britain to purchase, an attempt was made by some British subjects to seize and colonise the waste part. Portugal objecting that it was still her territory, the President of the French Republic, MacMahon, was asked to arbitrate, and he decided that the entire bay was Portuguese. This certainly prevented Kruger from acquiring it, but as the only profit the Portuguese could make of it was by Transvaal trade, they were glad to allow large quantities of guns and military material (called explosives for mining) to go through to Pretoria. Our Government endeavoured in vain to get this particular traffic stopped, but it was made clear that the British were on guard against Boer ambitions when Lord Salisbury annexed the valueless strip of coast south of Delagoa Bay and notified Portugal that we should not recognise any claim set up to the uncolonised country lying behind Mozambique (Mashonaland and Matabele-land), but considered that our "sphere of control" extended to the Zambesi (1887).

This sphere was entrusted to the management of the *British South Africa Company*, organised by the able and resolute Cecil Rhodes, a pioneer and financier who had won the confidence of the majority of Englishmen in South Africa. The Company's territory was indeed named after him, Rhodesia. He was both president of the Company and Prime Minister of Cape Colony.

The two rival policies which were being organised in the 'nineties in South Africa were—(a) a plan for a general federation of South Africa under the Union Jack as a British country; (b) a plan for organising not only a wholly independent Boer Transvaal, but a control of Cape Colony by the Dutch inhabitants in Dutch, or non-English, interests, for which purpose a Dutchmen's society, the *Afrikander Bond*, was formed.

If the readiness of the Home Government to rely on chartered Companies to extend national interests seems to recall Tudor and Jacobean methods, the sequel, "the Jameson Raid," is as thoroughly seventeenth century as Boer Puritanism. Rhodes was bent on a rapid realisation of his vision of a united British South Africa. He believed that he had power enough to hurry it on by force, and that a conspiracy of an elementary type would surprise the Transvaalers into submission and the Home Government into sanction (December-January 1895-6).

The plot of the much-written-of *Jameson Raid* was, in brief, that the English party at Johannesburg, having procured weapons, should rise, and somehow persuade the other nationals to join them, and that a body of amateur troops under an amateur captain, Dr. Jameson, the popular administrator of Rhodesia, should go from Rhodesia to help.

In order to impress what was believed to be British public opinion, these troops—the mounted police of the South Africa Company—were to be appealed to, by the rebel miners, to come and "save the women and children," and a letter to this effect was actually written out beforehand and furnished to Rhodes, who filled in a false date and telegraphed it to London as soon as Jameson started.

But Kruger was a cleverer conspirator than Rhodes and well aware of his advantage if the other side began the violence. He and his able general, Cronje, left the miners of Johannesburg with nobody to fight against and ensconced their excellent force, three or four times outnumbering Jameson's, on a key position which he must pass. The raiders were then shot down till the survivors surrendered.

All that the High Commissioner, Sir Hercules Robinson, felt able to do was to order the miners to give up their weapons and himself to receive from Kruger his humiliated prisoners as undesirable aliens, for deportation to their native country, England, where they were duly tried for conspiring against "a friendly country." Their punishments and complaints furnished a large temporary literature; Rhodes escaped trial and only had to resign his offices; the miners settled down to endure a few more years of tyranny. The real penalty fell upon the settlers in the South Africa Company's territory, where the natives, freed from awe of the now deported constables, felt that the 'big stick' was held by Boer, not Briton, and in a grand outbreak destroyed all the farms, with fearful loss of lives.

Rhodes' personal coolness and skill saved Cape Colony, but he had virtually pulled out his foundation stone to supply a catapult, and so had ruined the promising start made in Rhodesia.

The effect on Kruger and the Transvaal Boers generally was to stimulate their pride and recklessness. They were persuaded that the English neither could nor would venture on fighting, but were an effete and utterly stupid people and government. They still

exploited the gold-mines by diverting most of the profits to themselves, and kept the *Uitlanders* in a state of semi-thralldom by continually altering the Transvaal laws and 'constitution' so as to debar the miners from ever attaining to citizenship or even to the merest justice.

In the laughter which, in many European countries, covered the fiasco of the *Raid*, echoed a stern note of insult to Great Britain.

The result for Kruger was that he and all the Boers, despising English fighting and diplomacy, made vigorous preparation for a day of reckoning which should sweep the British flag from South Africa. But it was unlucky for Kruger that the impulsive German Emperor should have stripped the veil from past intrigues.

On the day after the *raid*, Wilhelm II telegraphed to the President his "sincere congratulations that without appealing to the help of friendly Powers you and your people have succeeded in repelling with your own forces the armed bands which had broken into your country and in maintaining the independence of your country against foreign aggression."

All the world drew the same conclusion as to the 'friendly Power,' and Cape Colony and Natal felt no illusions about the contents of the huge cases of 'agricultural machinery' and 'pianos' which were being imported by every feasible route into the Transvaal for the next three years.

Both sides underrated each other. It was unimaginable to the Cabinet that the Transvaal Government could really believe itself able to resist Great Britain; they despatched a few troops to South Africa and assumed that on their arrival President Kruger would give in.

On the other hand, the Boers were convinced that they could 'sweep the English into the sea,' and imagined all the Dutchmen of Cape Colony and the Orange State joining in swift assaults on the principal British centres. Kruger went on writing despatches until the moment arrived which suited him. In October 1899, at the season when the grass was good enough for fodder, he handed an ultimatum to the British representative at Pretoria demanding the withdrawal of British troops from South Africa.

Three days later the Boers began war. They formed sieges against Kimberley and Mafeking, where the small garrisons and the residents refused to surrender, knowing that they were holding the Boer forces back from Natal. Natal was being defended by Sir George White, who found himself obliged to hold the vulnerable railway junction of Ladysmith because it had been made a great stores depôt.

There followed two and a half years of severe fighting. The foes were pretty evenly matched; the Boers were sharp shooters and by habit adapted to guerilla tactics, they knew the whole country, had friends and spies everywhere, had obtained the latest artillery

invented in France and Germany, with excellent gunners, and considered all devices for misleading the enemy permissible.

The newly-arrived English soldiers, not yet acclimatised, found themselves in a country of high rocks, deep gullies, poisonous water and a burning climate, among people most of whom were foes disguised as friends. They had been but slightly trained in gunnery (for economy's sake), and their principal generals, Buller and Methuen, had no large experience. The men sent out, moreover, were selected partly with a view to saving expense, partly on the idea that this 'little war' would be a good training for recruits.

For the first year failure after failure tested the British troops. Generals attempted night-marches and surprises, which usually resulted in losing the way and walking into traps. Hundreds of brave and unskilled troops under puzzled officers shot away their ammunition and then, on the analogy of mock battles in manoeuvres, surrendered, to the amazement of the entire world. Buller could not contrive to relieve Ladysmith, and authorised White to surrender.

But White and his resolute men steadily held out against starvation and disease and a terrific bombardment to which their obsolete little cannon could not reply. Their situation had been rendered just tenable by prompt help from the Navy. White sent an urgent appeal to the squadron off Natal for some guns, whereupon Sir Percy Scott and Captain Lambton unshipped several heavy naval guns, invented carriages for them and sent them with a gallant guard of sailors to Ladysmith.

In the meantime, General French was making a reputation as a cavalry commander in Cape Colony, holding in check a much larger Boer force under two picked leaders.

The Boers began to learn that Time was for the English, who had not yet been "swept into" their native element (a process so consistently destructive to the broom), nor had any "friendly Power" stepped in to help.

The Government at home filled up the depleted ranks of the reserves and sanctioned a fine volunteer mounted corps of "Imperial Yeomanry" into whose ranks flocked Englishmen from every quarter of the globe. The resourceless Buller was superseded by Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, who came for the second time, with forces of great strength. Most striking of all, Canada, New Zealand and the different Australian States announced their participation in this national struggle and despatched contingents of fine volunteers to the Cape, to learn war under Roberts and to demonstrate to South Africa and to the rest of the world that the Empire was a unity which would not tolerate a sectional disruption.

In March 1900 the two Boer Presidents coolly offered to make peace if assured of their perfect independence. They were disillusioned simultaneously by Chamberlain's reply and by the vigour of Roberts. He directed the relief of the three resolute garrisons of Ladysmith, Kimberley and Mafeking, and carried the war into

the Boers' own countries : in vain they sought to persuade the U.S.A. to mediate. Pretoria was taken and made British headquarters, and the annexation of the Transvaal was again proclaimed. Already Kruger, taking with him the treasure chest, had fled to Germany, but, being ignored, retired into Holland, whence he adjured the Boer leaders to resist to the uttermost.

These generals, therefore, broke up their commandos into small bands and kept up a skilful guerilla war, vainly hoping to coax the Dutch of Cape Colony into helping them. Secure that British clemency would protect their families, they had nothing to deter them from this quite logical conclusion of their general retrogression. They lived, like Border clans or Ishmaelites, on such pillage as they could seize. Their families were indeed taken care of by the generous enemy, though, as each farm was a *depôt* and signal station for the Boers and a trap for our soldiers, *concentration camps* were established where the women and children were quartered and fed. Unfortunately they had also to be doctored, nursed and drilled in the elements of sanitation; even schooling was inflicted on the young; the whole forming a spectacle of such 'cruelty' as moved half the newspapers of the world to hysterical indignation.

The suppression of brave guerillas has always been a difficult problem. Roberts deputed the task to the ingenious Kitchener, whom the Cabinet had transferred from Egypt to become his Chief of Staff. From Egypt were drawn also the principal military and engineering officers, who in the course of the next few years placed war and peace in South Africa upon a modern footing. Lord Roberts, himself now unfit for the rapid travelling necessary, made Kitchener his deputy Commander-in-Chief, and after the victory over Cronje at Paardeberg went home at the close of 1900. He announced openly that the war was in effect concluded, and as Rhodes and Buller had already published similar optimistic assurances, the Government and the public at home were for a long time unable to understand that from such information the Boers drew encouragement to conduct a fresh offensive. They extended their freebooting operations, as urged by Kruger, their delusion being that other European Powers would combine to constrain Great Britain, by some means, to give up the struggle.

But Kitchener dealt with the military situation as it existed. Deaf to applications from Home for the return of troops, he devised a new strategy to foil the Boers and organised a mobile army with adequate transport and supplies. He obtained from England an expert financier versed in the necessary technique (as once Wellington, in the Peninsula, had sent for a skilled Judge), told both superiors and inferiors that economy and efficiency were not rivals but twins, detached first French and then Haig to keep Cape Colony quiet, and, being for a time without a competent Staff, himself supervised those details of command which a Staff ought to have worked out until Ian Hamilton returned to become Chief of the

Staff. There were now and then complaints that Kitchener gave orders directly to officers in the field instead of sending them through some superior general, but it no longer 'happened' (as it had at Paardeberg) that a commander faced his troops the wrong way or 'gallantly' flung away his life in a futile effort to cancel a grave mistake by a deed of derring-do. In the end the guerillas were held up by the establishment of a series of fixed posts which could not be evaded by clever horsemanship. Numbers of little forts known as *blockhouses* were erected along the railway line, and based upon them columns of mounted troops were able to advance against the raiding bands in converging lines, so as to push them into inhospitable country where they had to surrender. These *drives* proved successful against one Boer troop after another, till in June 1902 the last surrendered at Vereeniging.

The Boers experienced remarkably generous treatment. No confiscations or punishments, but a Civil administration, water-works and drainage, and a reasonable system of education, were inflicted upon them and mollified by a gift of three millions to repair their farms and liquidate their finance. No slavery was permitted, but there was no more talk of giving votes to the natives.

The settlement of the Transvaal had indeed been begun even before the close of hostilities. The reorganisation was entrusted to the skilful hands of Lord Milner, with a knot of brilliant assistants (1901), and the Colonial Secretary, Chamberlain, saved some time by himself visiting the country in 1903.

Next year the Transvaal was entrusted with 'representative institutions,' and in 1907 the Campbell-Bannerman Cabinet bestowed complete self-government.

Rhodes died in 1902, but he left behind him a scheme for a commercial union of the South African provinces which greatly helped towards the much-talked-of federation. Jameson, who had survived to become Prime Minister of Cape Colony, took the first step towards this goal. A National Convention met at Durban and formulated in 1909 a Constitution for the Union of South Africa. Each Province adopted the Act of Union, and the Imperial Parliament sanctioned it immediately. The first Union Parliament was opened by the Duke of Connaught in the name of the King in November 1910.

From 1902 the still acute controversies within the different States have been conducted on the lines of party politics: Dutch or English educational systems, treatment of natives, admission or exclusion of Asiatics appear to be the principal points of difference. The problem is not yet completely solved.

Unfortunately the grudging treatment which Whig ministers of old had meted out to Wellington was repeated towards Kitchener by too many of the democratic voices which now professed to speak for England. They appeared to think victory required

apology, and adopted the unjust assertion of a popular poet that victory was due wholly to colonial soldiers. "There had always been people who honestly believed that the Boers were in the right; there were political partisans who hated Chamberlain; there were the Irish Nationalists who hated England; there was the type of person known in long after years as Pacifist; and behind all these there may quite conceivably have been an active foreign-fed anti-British propaganda. This combination was able to invoke and exploit the characteristically British sentiment of humanity, holding Kitchener up to odium for the steps which he was forced to take towards finality. . . . Both in Parliament and in the Press the man responsible was denounced as cruel and callous—not only for what he had done, but for what he was erroneously, and sometimes malignantly, alleged to have done." ¹

¹ Sir G. Arthur, *Life of Lord Kitchener*, II. p. 108—a book in which may be found the clearest explanation of the main military and political features of the war.

XIX

CONCLUSION

ENGLAND IN THE TRANSITIONAL AGE. EDWARD VII (JANUARY 1901–MAY 1910)

(i)

It was universally felt that the death of Queen Victoria marked the close of a great era. Her reign of sixty-three years witnessed the building of the Empire, the political rearrangement of Europe and of British relations with it, and such profound alterations in English political, commercial and social systems as amounted to a national transformation without any overt revolution. The entire period was one of development and reform. Not only had the strenuous endeavours of two generations largely overtaken old neglects and injustices, but every decade carried forward new reforms. The many interesting, and too many uninteresting, memoirs of the nineteenth century—not forgetting the unimpeachable testimony of *Punch*—exhibit the same phenomenon—the procession of the young men kindling from the older their own torches of progress and vigorously bearing them forward,¹ to be in their turn relieved by a younger generation, whose ‘frivolity’ they had always lamented.

A cardinal social feature of the Victorian era was the acceptance of a democratic equality in ordinary life. Successive Acts had resulted in the Government, both local and parliamentary, taking over responsibilities which had aforetime been regarded as the province of private business, or perhaps of benevolence, or simple chance, and providing national administration for them, which resulted in sanitation, education and the general convenience and prosperity being treated as the proper concern of the community. A lavish plenty of books and journals spread a habit of reading and made news and ideas common property. Minds became more alert; novelty was welcomed; the ease and speed of the new locomotion made the whole nation enamoured of movement, to travel fast and far being felt to be in itself a pleasure and a pride.

Nor were travel and manufactures alone conducted by machinery

¹ To name only one chain—F. D. Maurice drew inspiration from Wordsworth, one of Maurice’s disciples was A. V. Dicey, who was the master of James Bryce.

(be the motive-power gas, steam or electricity), but also many ordinary processes of daily life, till '*civilisation*' to the majority signified being able to procure light, water and heat by turning taps, and food or amusement by dropping coins; "penny in the slot" became a term of fact and criticism. This, to be sure, was the characteristic only of town life; but between 1837 and 1901 the nation had become mainly a population of townsfolk and refused to be anything else unless the easiness of town life could be diffused in the country and the Dominions overseas.

Probably the most valuable quality of Victorian progress was the parallel development of democracy and individuality. If the increase of the electorate tended to make political parties more mechanical, the activities of local government worked oppositely, and the early tendency to politicalise the local councils soon declined. Neither did universal education entail a dead level of sameness. There was ample room within Government regulations for different types of schools, stimulated afresh by the varied characteristics of the universities, new or old.

It had become a fact that all careers were open to all men, though stump orators were apt to deny it because the professions required hard work, brains and perseverance. And the many avenues open to ambition, together with the lengthy experience of prosperity, tended to spread that tolerant good nature which by 1900 had become the prevalent temper of our people, and had been recognised as a distinction of Londoners two centuries earlier. The "heave-half-a-brick-at-him" temper became a jest and then ceased to be even a jest.

But with universal travel, information and tolerance there was, of equal necessity, less time or inclination for reflection. The easier and cheaper books and journals became, the less value was attached to them, while work, instead of being the main occupation of a regular life, tended to become spasmodic, so that fits of energy (usually termed over-working) alternated with holidays (whether termed vacations, cures or strikes).

In the historical and continental sense, *class* (that is, *caste*) had hardly existed in England since the Saxon era, birth not fixing anyone to a permanent position. Any man and woman could marry (subject to the law of the Church and the occasional restrictions of feudal law) without incurring legal or social penalty; noblemen's children were born ordinary freemen except the eldest son, who was obliged to continue the hereditary rank and responsibility of his father. But of these there were but few, most eminence being personal. Nevertheless there had always been in existence what the English correctly termed a "governing class." It was, however, a class formed less by descent than by acquirements and habits. That it could be entered was proved by the careers of Gladstone and Disraeli and of numbers of our most eminent statesmen long before them.

But a more important truth is that there had dwelt in every

English county for many generations enough men of conscience and capacity to carry on the management of national business, and that when, in the Victorian era, the national and imperial administration developed to an enormous and intricate degree, there still was found a sufficient supply of men of integrity and ability to carry on the countless courts and councils and to link round the earth British security and justice, from the empire of India to ocean rocks scarcely known to the geographer.

"And what do you think of England *now*?" a mourner over the decadence of youth asked of an old Colonial official, 'retired' to spend his old age at home.

He was startled by the reply: "England is a reservoir of capacities!"

(ii)

EDWARD VII (1901-MAY 1910)

The outlook on the opening of the twentieth century and of the reign of King Edward VII seemed to be towards (a) a further development of democratic ideas, particularly a larger share for Labour in political influence and social benefits; (b) further relaxation of restraints on general manners, indicated by the increasing value set upon pleasure or comfort and the decreasing regard paid to personal authority and convention. But no one could overlook certain obstacles which at home hindered the progress to Utopia: disagreements among different interests; rivalry among Trade-unions and competition for control within them; disinclination for thinking among voters; the deft use of ambiguous language in politics and the widening divergence between politics and the genuine interests of life. There was the further difficulty that all schemes of betterment implied expense, which could be provided only by heavier taxation or some sweeping curtailment of other national expenses. All could agree that what was wanted was a period of *good trade*, of cheap living and high wages together, implying a flood of cheap imports and a simultaneous stream of high-priced exports, though no man could point out the way to that ideal. But of any obstacle to progress from outside, other than economic tariffs, few as yet ever dreamed.

The prospect was all the brighter for the accession of a really popular king who had long since won the general affection. His vigour in recognising new developments and helping voluntary efforts, his obvious pleasure in the amusements which pleased most Englishmen, his lack of any pretence about the arts which bore most Englishmen, his kindness, tolerance and sense of humour, his plain-speaking, his frequently easy-going manner notwithstanding a considerable attention to the requirements of public dignity—all combined to make him beloved.

There had been a saying in certain parts of the Continent, par-

ticularly in Germany, that Queen Victoria would prove to be the last British sovereign, since no *man* could be expected to acquiesce in the restraints of English constitutional monarchy.

"Our loyal passion for our temperate kings" is so characteristically English as scarcely to be understood of an alien. Yet, if the aged Queen had become a revered symbol, the reign of her successor still further assured the stability of the throne. His own people, and such foreigners as were able to understand them and him, unanimously recognised in him the typical King of English historical tradition, at once the leader and the representative of the nation.

This recognition was of real importance, for the main solicitude of King Edward and his Government was for the maintenance of European peace. It seemed to them, as to several other Governments, that peace was continually being menaced by Germany, whose self-asserting Kaiser was for ever exhibiting himself as a claimant of something. Whether he personally, or a group of influential men who utilised him, was actually responsible, mattered little; what he publicly announced meant Germany's policy. That policy was, in the first place, vindictiveness towards France, in the second, opposition to England. It had been with dismay that the Germans, after 1872, beheld France promptly paying to them the enormous "war indemnity" they had imposed on her, and witnessed the reconstruction of the indomitable nation. "If we had known they could do all that," said the Germans, quite openly, "we would have taken double." The surest path to popularity among them was to insult France. But French ministers might also have to think of popular feeling and to rebut a national insult.

CONFERENCE OF ALGECIRAS

Not long after his accession Edward VII began to move in the direction of friendliness between England and France. For years an unfriendly temper had existed owing to French jealousy of the British position in Egypt; the Marchand expedition to Fashoda (1898) had been the latest expression of that jealousy.

But in 1904, stimulated by the King's friendly visit to Paris and to President Loubet, French statesmen became more willing for an understanding with Great Britain. The crux of diplomacy just then was Morocco. So large an area of barbarism so close to Europe was inconvenient. As long before as 1880 an international convention at Madrid had recognised Morocco as the sphere of Spain, France and Great Britain. Neither Spain nor France could endure to see each other active there, yet the interests of both necessitated some orderly control over the brigand tribes and their impotent Sultan. In 1904 the French Government agreed to cease obstructing British action in Egypt in return for a pledge of British support with regard to Morocco.

But no sooner had France drawn up a scheme of reforms and

come to an agreement with Spain for a moderate police control, than the Kaiser's Government announced that Germany's influence in Morocco must be asserted, and the Kaiser paid a visit in his yacht to Tangier (1905) in order, he said, to recognise the independence of the Sultan, whom he instigated to invite a new conference. As this was obviously meant to block Franco-Spanish action, Great Britain, Spain and Italy declined to attend such a conference—unless France should accept—and the U.S.A. resolved to do what Great Britain did. France at first declined, on the decision of her Foreign Minister, Delcassé, whose ambition for his country drove her vigorously on the forward path. Thereupon the German Ambassador in Paris threatened war so plainly that the Ministry compelled Delcassé to resign and agreed to the conference.

The Conference of Algeciras (1906) exhibited Germany, supported by Austria, opposing France, supported by all the other Powers. The particular result as to Morocco was to endorse the proposals of France, and the general effect, to indicate an *Entente* (not treaty, but *understanding*) between France and England.

This good understanding was further emphasised by visits of the two fleets to each other's ports and mutual courtesies between, not only the respective admirals, but the King and the President. "Vive notre roi!" cried the Paris crowds, upon one of His Majesty's visits.

To his political spite against M. Delcassé the Kaiser added a kind of family spite against King Edward, wrote rudely about him, and said "he was envious!"

HOME POLITICS

The domestic politics of the reign pursued the usual changes. When Salisbury's failing health compelled his retirement, Mr. Arthur Balfour by unanimous consent replaced him as leader of the Conservative party and Prime Minister (1902-5). His great achievement was the creation of the *Committee of Imperial Defence* and the *Army Council*. The scope of the former was exactly what its title suggested. It was a development from an earlier "Colonial Defence Committee." The Army Council was to provide intelligent administration for the Army, its ostensible and legally responsible chief being some perpetually changing civilian politician. Both bodies were non-parliamentary, which meant (a) that they could be composed of real soldiers, sailors and administrators, (b) that they could furnish expert advice unhampered by politics or journalism, (c) that they must be only *advisory*, the Secretary of State taking the responsibility of decisions and his department sending out orders.

Thus political democracy was supplied with working partners. In truth both bodies sprang from the lessons of the South African War, as did two other important movements: (1) the reforms within

the *Army Medical Service*, carried out by the doctors themselves and supplemented by the voluntary training of numbers of nurses and orderlies under the St. John's Ambulance Association, especially from 1910; and (2) the voluntary organisation of *Boy Scouts*, whereby a practical but voluntary training came to supplement statutory school education.

Another national safeguard was the provision, by parliamentary Bill, of a naval programme for several years, a specified number of ships to be laid down successively, so that old-fashioned vessels might be steadily replaced by new. The reason for this was that recent improvements in design, machinery, guns, etc. had produced naval types so powerful as automatically to render former types unable to fight them. Therefore a virtually new fleet had to be built. The principle was that of the Naval Defence Act of 1889, known as the Two-Power standard, viz. that the English Fleet should have a 10 per cent. superiority over the two next greatest navies. The culmination of improvement was the *Dreadnought* (1905-6).

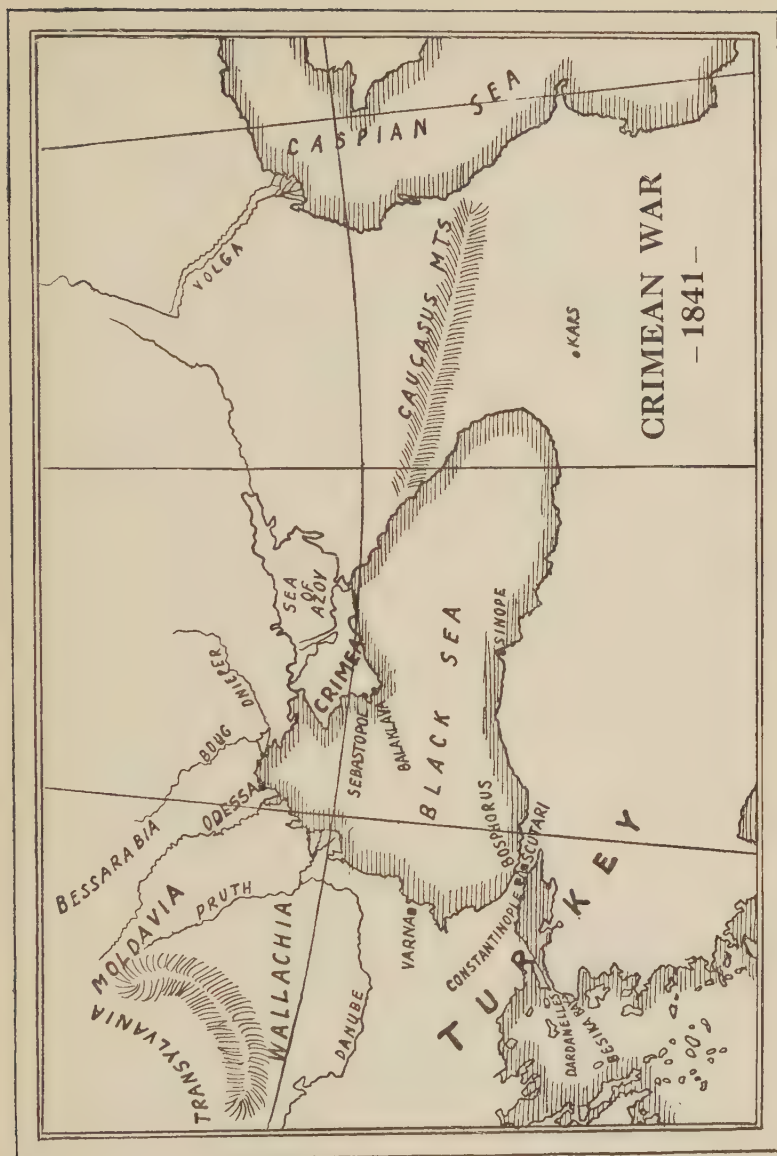
But the Conservative party was disrupted by Chamberlain's crusade for Tariff Reform, and the Balfour Cabinet resigned in December 1905. The ensuing election (1906) was 'fought' by the Liberals with cries of "Free Trade" and "Chinese slavery" (meaning indentured coolies from China in South Africa). The Liberal-Radical party obtained a large majority and Campbell-Bannerman as Prime Minister fulfilled his political promises.¹ Chinese labour in South African mines was forbidden. Full responsible government was bestowed upon the Transvaal and the Orange Colony. An Education Act asserted public control of all schools to which any public money was granted. The Trade Disputes Act gave to Trade-unions a privileged position in law (their funds being made immune from fines). The Plural Voting Act established "one man, one vote" as a principle (*i.e.* the vote really became personal and no longer derived from some qualifying property). The Workmen's Compensation Act completed the provisions made by previous Acts in 1897 and 1900 in securing to employees compensation from employers for injury. Next year were carried the Deceased Wife's Sister Marriage Act, the Criminal Appeal Act, and Haldane's Army scheme, which virtually turned the now very small regular army into a force always to be kept ready as an Expeditionary force, but recognised the Territorials as the defensive army for Great Britain. The Prime Minister intimated to the House of Commons his intention to bestow some power of domestic self-government on Ireland, to provide national old-age pensions, and to reduce the power of the House of Lords to reject Bills passed by the Commons. But his health failed, and

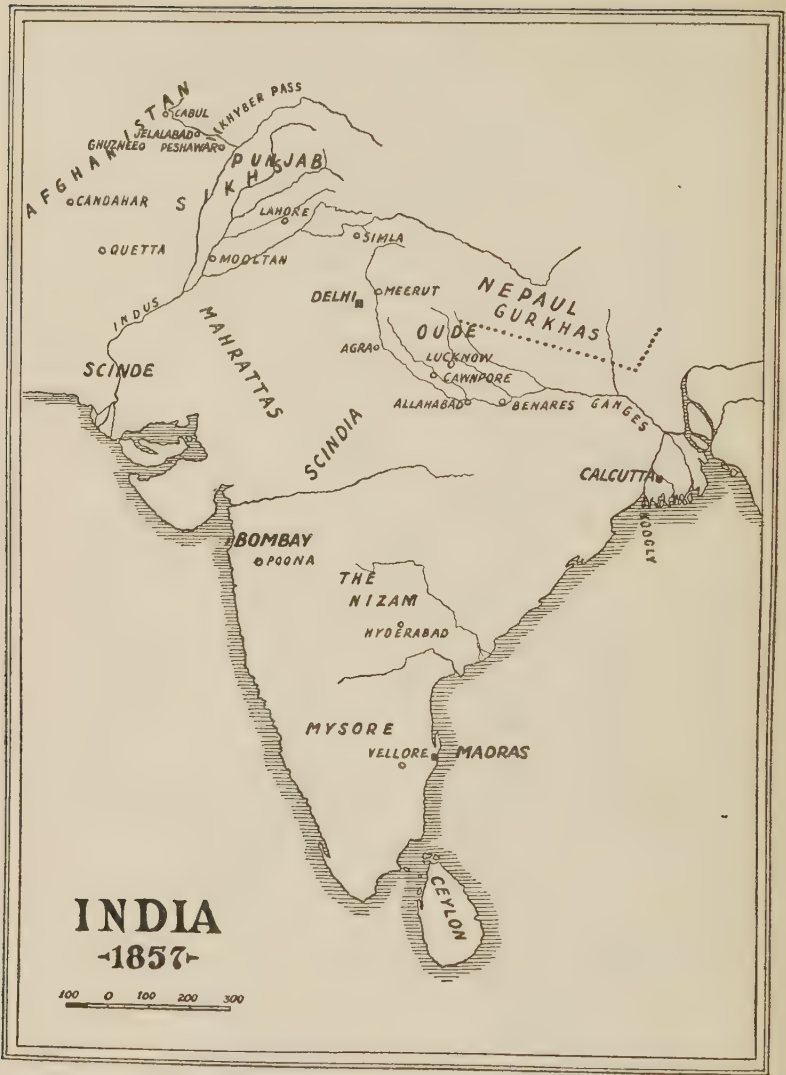
¹ But soon after the election the price of bread rose: "What a shame," people cried in a Cambridgeshire village, "to talk such a lot about their large loaf and never tell it was going to cost more!"

early in 1908 Mr. Asquith succeeded as Leader of the Liberal party and Prime Minister. During Balfour's Ministry King Edward had pointed out the anomaly of the lack of any official recognition of the dignity of *Prime Minister*, the greatest power in the kingdom, and it was officially notified that after Mr. Balfour's tenure the Prime Minister should rank next after the Archbishops and Lord Chancellor,¹ as the first of the Ministry and commonalty. Mr. Campbell-Bannerman was the first to occupy formally this position.

Asquith as Prime Minister carried forward the Radical programme. Old-age pensions were sanctioned, and the enormous funds required were to be obtained (though this was not explained) partly by suspending the naval programme and partly by fresh taxes. Any new taxation would, of course, be unpopular, but the agitation might provide an opportunity for that Radical desideratum, demolishing the House of Lords. Asquith intended to give Home Rule to Ireland and to obviate first the veto which the Lords were sure to exercise. But the pretext for attacking the Upper House was not to be Ireland, but Mr. Lloyd George's budget of 1910. Hitherto the Exchequer had been handled as a kind of safety department, which examined the estimates made by other departments and cut them down. But the Board of Admiralty had compelled the Ministry to continue the shipbuilding programme (1909), so that funds could not be economised as intended. Therefore new taxation was required. The 1910 Budget exhibited a new and startling policy. By estimating for a large expenditure for particular purposes and fixing particular and heavy taxes to obtain the money the Budget itself became the instrument of change—reform, said the Chancellor of the Exchequer; socialism, said his critics: at all events the policy was new, in practice the Budget would involve a large social reconstruction.

¹ The order of precedence being, next after the King, the Royal Family, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor, the Archbishop of York, the Prime Minister. In practice, most Prime Ministers held the office of First Lord of the Treasury and therefore ranked first of all ministers.





SHORT CHRONOLOGY

- 1832. Reform of Parliament.
- 1834. Act for Emancipation of Slaves.
New Poor Law.
- 1834. Houses of Parliament burnt.
- 1835. Melbourne's second ministry.
- 1837. **Victoria.**
- 1839. Prepaid postage begins.
Anti-corn-law agitation.
- 1840. The Queen's marriage.
- 1841. Peel's second ministry.
Income-tax.
- 1842. Afghan war, Khyber disaster.
- 1844. Natal annexed.
Potato famine begins.
- 1846. Free-trade in corn carried.
Russell Prime Minister.
- 1848. Chartist fiasco.
- 1850. Australian gold-field discovered.
- 1851. Great Exhibition.
- 1852. Death of Duke of Wellington.
- 1853-5. Aberdeen's ministry.
- 1854-6. Crimean war.
- 1855. Palmerston, Prime Minister.
Sebastopol falls.
- 1856. Conference and Treaty of Paris.
- 1857-9. Indian Mutiny.
- 1858. Government of India transferred to the Crown.
- 1859. Elcho's act protecting Trade-unions.
- 1861. (American civil war opens.) *Affair of the Trent.*
Lancashire cotton famine.
Bankrupt debtors relieved.
- 1862. *Affair of the Alabama.*
- 1865. Russell-Gladstone ministry.
- 1866. Derby-Disraeli ministry.
Abyssinian expedition. Fenian outrages.
- (1865-6. Prussia defeats Denmark, Hanover and Austria and annexes
several German states.)
- 1867. Dominion of Canada.
Royal Commission on Trade-unions.
Suez Canal opened.
Discovery of gold and diamonds in S. Africa.
- 1868. Disraeli's Reform Act.
Gladstone's first ministry.
- 1869. Irish Church disestablished.
- 1869. Endowed Schools Act.

- 1870. Elementary Education Act.
Irish Land Act.
American Fenians attack Canada.
(Franco-German war opens.)
Neutrality of Belgium treaties.
(Third French Republic.)
- 1871. (Prussian king becomes German emperor.)
- 1871. Local Government Board.
- 1872. Geneva arbitration on *Alabama*.
- 1873. Home-rule party and Land League begin.
- 1873. Supreme Court of Judicature.
- 1874. Disraeli's ministry.
- 1875. Dominion of New Zealand.
Suez Canal controlled.
Agricultural Holdings Act.
- 1876. The Queen Empress of India.
- 1877. Transvaal annexed.
- 1878. Berlin Congress.
- 1879. Afghan war. Zulu war.
- 1880. Gladstone's second ministry.
Transvaal revolt.
- 1881. Lawlessness in Ireland.
Parnell imprisoned.
Convention of Pretoria.
Irish Land Act.
- 1882. Phoenix Park murders.
Wolseley wins battle of Tel-el-Kebir.
- 1883. Corrupt Practices Act.
- 1884. Soudan troubles. Gordon sent to Khartoum.
- 1885. Berlin Conference on Africa.
Salisbury's first ministry.
Ashbourne Act.
- 1886. Gladstone's third ministry.
Home-rule bill defeated.
Split in Liberal party.
Salisbury's second ministry.
- 1887. Queen Victoria's Jubilee.
First Colonial conference.
- 1888. Parnell commission.
County councils.
- 1889. Split in Irish party.
Strike at Thames docks.
- 1891. Balfour's Irish Land Purchase Act.
Factory Act. Tithes Act.
- 1892. Gladstone's fourth ministry.
Parish councils.
Death-duties graduated.
- 1895. Jameson raid.
- 1899. Boer war in S. Africa opens.
- 1900. Roberts and Kitchener overcome Boer guerillas.
- 1901. Death of Queen Victoria.
Edward VII.

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